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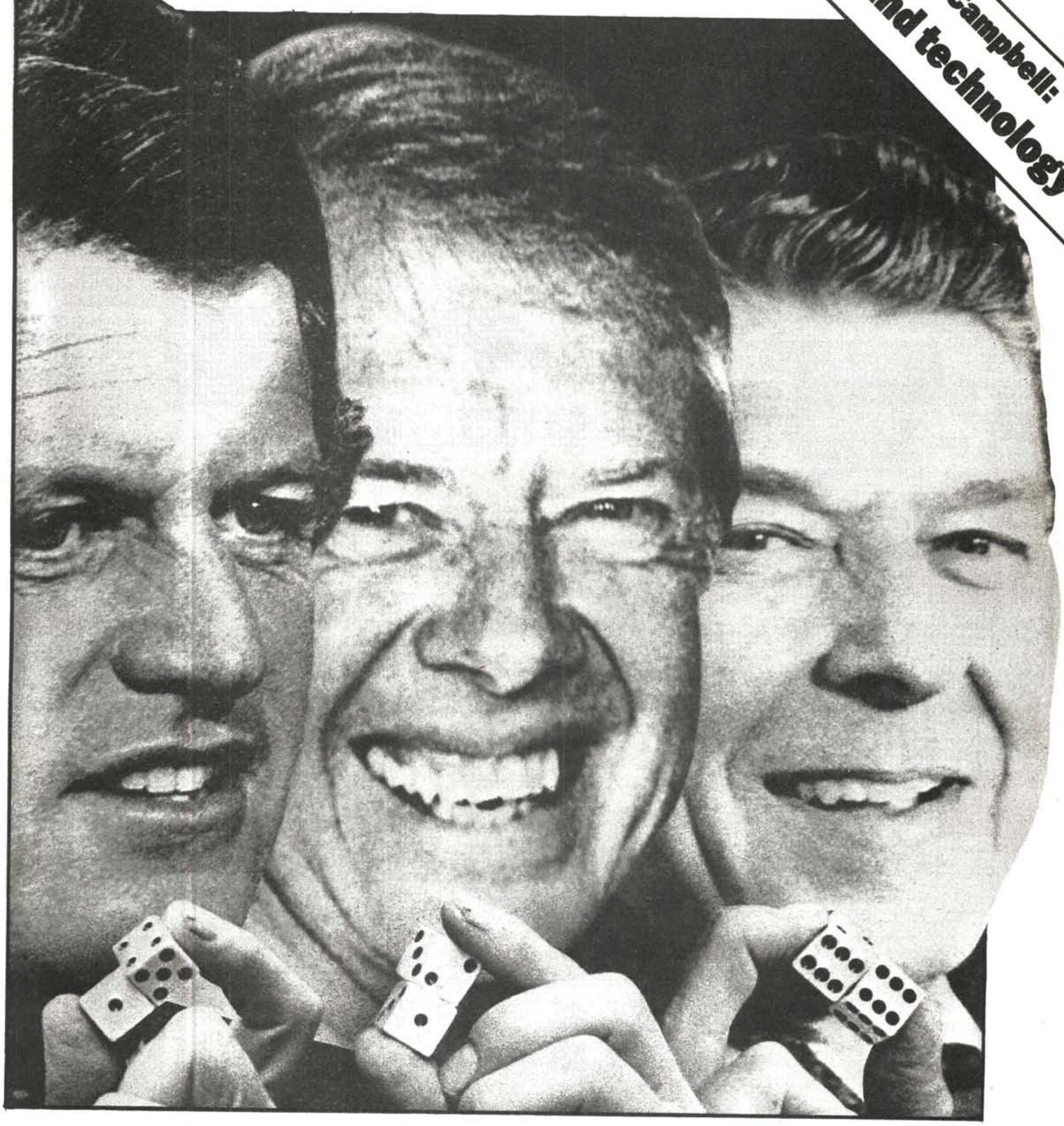
NEW STATESMAN

Duncan Campbell:
police and technology



DICING FOR THE PRESIDENCY

Le Duc Tho on Kissinger
The £2,000 million subsidy to motorists
Are the Guildford bombers innocent?

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol 99 21 March 1980 No 2557

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NOTES

Postman's sack

Andy Weir and Rob Burns write: Although many were under the impression that the West German Federal Republic had laid to rest one of the less attractive adverts for its 'model democracy', the notorious *berufsverbot*, the issue is far from dead. Between 24 and 26 March Hans Peter, a postman of 29 years standing, will find out whether or not he must lose his job for being a member of the German Communist Party. The state can sack or refuse to employ anyone considered to be an 'enemy of the Constitution'. So seriously does the German Post Office take the threat posed by Hans Peter that the warrant for disciplinary proceedings against him was signed by the Minister of Posts, Kurt Gscheidle. The warrant cites his membership of the Communist Party and his CP candidature in three elections.

The Stuttgart postman's previous communications from his employers have been of a rather different character. In July 1974 he received a citation from his office chief thanking him for his 'great personal commitment often beyond normal working hours'. In January 1976 he was officially thanked for his outstanding service on behalf of the Federal Republic itself on his completion of 25 years as a postman. But it was in 1977 that he first got the letter saying that he had betrayed his duties by being 'politically active on behalf of an organisation considered by the Federal government as an enemy of the Constitution'. Since then, he has been the subject of eight investigative 'hearings'. In June 1978, the chairman of the investigating commission concluded that 'no facts could be established to show that Hans Peter has actively opposed the free and democratic basic order'; but that did not deter Herr Gscheidle from authorising disciplinary proceedings against him. If found guilty, he will get the sack and lose his state pension.

Hans Peter's case is particularly important because it is likely to set a precedent for the 50 other employees of the Post Office and the railways facing similar action. At first the case was to have been heard in Peter's home town of Stuttgart. But it has been transferred from Stuttgart, where the courtroom can hold 150 people, to Frankfurt, where only 30 members of the public may be admitted. The authorities are undoubtedly sensitive to the impact of such a case in Stuttgart. Recently the daily paper there carried a half-page advert displaying a petition which was signed by 6,000 people.

In spite of the pleas of many German political forces and famous intellectuals such as Gunther Grass and Heinrich Böll, the application of the law is as stringent as ever. One and a half million people have been investigated since 1972, and more than 4,000 have been banned from their jobs because of a failure to demonstrate their 'loyalty to the Constitution'. Ironically, the practice of *berufsverbot* contravenes Article 33 of the Constitution, which guarantees every German equality of access to the public sector, irrespective of 'religious or political convictions'.

CBI's uneasy gamble

Simon Berlyn writes: The CBI's strike insurance plan, first put forward in September, is not making easy headway. No company has yet signed a proposal form because the premiums and the rating structure have yet to be devised. With pressure from its members mounting, the CBI hopes to get the go-ahead from its national council in April or May so that the scheme can start in October. The omens are mixed. The CBI has decided that companies must insure themselves against the effects of others' strikes and also against their own strikes. Some firms – without a history of strikes – were keen only to cover themselves against the first risk but for the fund to stand any chance of financial success it needs to spread its risks and premiums. However, companies will also be covered against reduced production caused by industrial action at a supplier or customer. Nonetheless CBI President, Sir John Greenborough, says 'I don't think that anyone feels this is an attempt to make our industrial relations cheaper.'

It has, he says, to be seen as part of a total package. Some parts of this package are promised by the government, such as restricting unions' legal immunities when taking strike action and the reduction of social security payments to strikers. But the CBI would like other changes in the law too, such as the legal enforcement of collective agreements.

Compensation for companies will be limited. The price of lost orders will not be recouped from the strike fund but companies are expected to get back 75 per cent of their overheads, the escalating costs of which the CBI feel have encouraged employers to settle strikes quickly. Compensation will be paid for a maximum of 50 days once a stoppage has gone on for a week. The major utilities – gas, electricity, water and sewage – will not be eligible to join the fund, mainly because of the costs of strikes in these industries.

These restrictions are a potential source of weakness. Much of the pressure for the fund came originally from members of the Engineering Employers' Federation who found their own strike fund inadequate to deal with last year's engineering strikes. If the CBI waters down its own scheme such customers may fade away. But if the fund is attractive enough to appeal to large industries – as big as the nationalised ones – there remains the danger that one strike in a key sector could cripple the fund.

Originally the CBI said that it was aiming to raise £100 to £200 million to start the fund, but now it refuses to earmark any sum and does not seem to have overcome the problem that would be caused if good risks – firms without a strike history – decide not to join the scheme. Sir John Greenborough hopes for 'a sense of unity'. It is possible that firms with bad records will be excluded from the scheme – though the CBI says no one has been excluded yet. But if the fund runs out of money there will be an extra whip-round among members and if this is unsuccessful, the fund will be suspended. To maximise tax savings, the fund is likely to be based in either Guernsey or Gibraltar.

Flying blacklegs

Judith Cook writes: Despite the steel strike, imports of steel have reached 80 per cent of last year's level. The west country has been one of the areas where the steel has been secretly docked and then transferred to private steel firms. At the beginning of last week a tip-off that steel was being unloaded at Padstow bought a handful of steel pickets from Wales to check out ports. They found nothing at the ports to which they were directed. But while they

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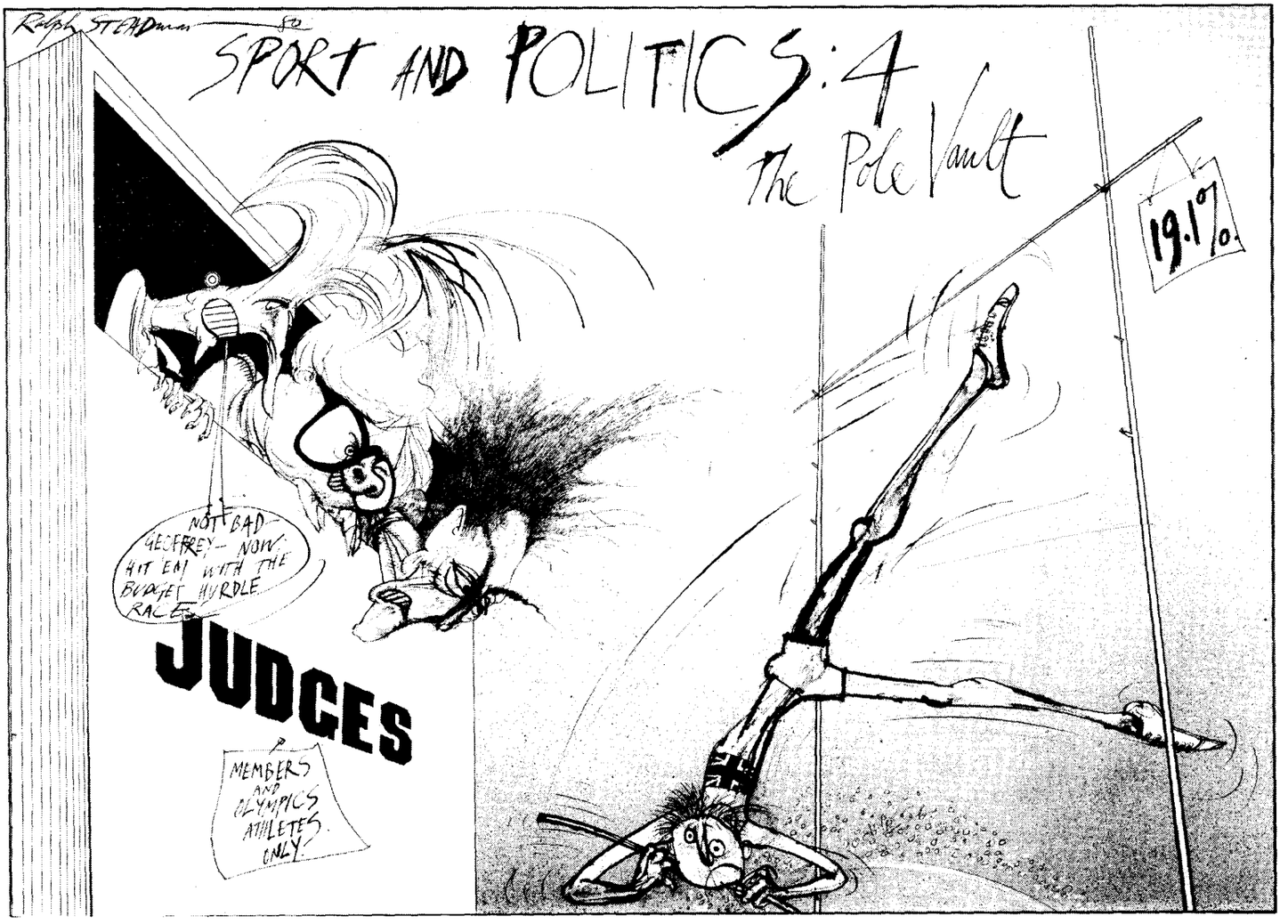
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NOTES

were in Cornwall on Wednesday, the Greek registered vessel Hecate docked at Torquay and unloaded 1500 tons of steel. Fourteen non-union dockers from the firm of Torbay Stevedores Ltd. began unloading the cargo while trucks from as far afield as Stoke and Cardiff waited to take the steel away. The ISTC pickets heard from a TGWU driver who refused to do the job. Work on unloading continued over Wednesday night while representations were made to Torbay Council – the quay is council-owned – and to Torbay Stevedores. The managing director of Stevedores was asked if reports were true that a further two steel vessels were due into Torbay and he categorically denied this saying that 'our next shipment is a Russian ship, laden with peat'.

However, late on Thursday night a second ship slipped into Torquay, the Othonia. By mid-morning a queue of lorries half a mile long was outside the docks waiting to take the steel away. Altogether 44 lorries left for the Midlands and Wales and they had been hiding in car parks and country lanes throughout the previous day waiting for the ship, which suggests no small amount of forward planning. The blackleg dockers had worked through the night, using the ship's masthead lights to avoid any delay in the morning. The handful of ISTC men tried to stop the lorries from leaving but without success. Alan Pierce of the ISTC says that many of the drivers were TGWU men and their names and the numbers of their lorries have been noted.

A third shipment of steel was landed in Devon on Sunday. While ISTC pickets from Wales and members of the TGWU from Exeter were in Torquay, the Danish-registered Joel put into Topsham. The quay is owned by Exeter City Council and, again, it was obviously a planned operation. The Joel did not fly the obligatory ensign showing its port of origin and once again lorries were standing by to take the cargo away. The steel was again unloaded by Torbay Stevedores who now describe themselves as 'flying Stevedores'. However, when the Joel put into Cardiff on Monday to load up with china clay she was blacked by the entire workforce and had to leave empty. Torbay Council may also face repercussions. The ISTC conference this year is booked to be held in Torquay.

Avon calling

Jonathan Coe writes: One of the groups competing for the commercial radio franchise in Bristol is being subjected to a smear campaign by the local newspaper – the chairman of which has an interest in another competitor for the franchise. Five consortia are competing to run the new radio station. One – Avon Listeners Radio – is being established as an open democratic organisation, accountable to its listeners; all the other applications come from conventional businesses interested in an attractive investment (local radios are one of Britain's most profitable industries, even after IBA levies).

Avon Listeners Radio has published its aims as establishing: 'a radio station which serves the everyday needs and interests of the people, is committed to working with listeners in making programmes and creating an audience with access to the microphone.' This has not met with the approval of Bristol's morning paper, the *Western Daily Press*, which on 23 February's front page described Avon Listeners as being supported by two 'left-wing Tribune Group Labour councillors'. The piece went on to imply that the Tribune group was supplying backing for the application.

It is true that two councillors expressed support for the application but they only attended one meeting and have not been seen since. The bulk of the station's supporters come from community, arts and welfare organisations. Avon Listeners Radio have, in fact, found it very difficult to persuade the Left that they should take some notice of the arrival of commercial radio in the West of England.

On 1 March one of the *Daily Press* columnists – Eric Price – returned to the subject in an article of rich fantasy. Avon Listeners' application with its 'ponderous title' would be 'unlikely to strike a responsive chord with the IBA', he wrote. One could imagine the programmes: *'Listen with Brother, The Building of Industry* by Robbo Robinson; *Your Car Today: Why You Must Keep to the Left*; *Woman's Hour: An Iron Curtain for your Kitchen*' and so on.

One person who is unlikely to be displeased by anything which discredits Avon Listeners Radio is Mr Andrew Breach, chairman of Bristol United Press, publishers of the *Daily Press*. He is a director and shareholder of Wessex Developments, owners of 55 per cent of the shares in Radio Avonside, one of the other groups bidding for the franchise. Mr Breach is also a shareholder directly in Radio Avonside. Such facts have not been heavily publicised in the pages of the *Western Daily Press*.

EEC's flight control

Victor Smart writes: Hopes of a swift initiative by the British Government to drastically reduce scheduled air fares in Europe have been dashed by the Civil Aviation Authority's rejection of Laker Airways' scheme to set up a pan-European airline flying up to 666 routes. Instead, after the longest public hearing in its history, the CAA has allowed BCal to proceed with much more timid proposals for a system of off-peak fares on six routes from London to Cologne, Hamburg, Hanover, Helsinki, Stuttgart and Vienna. Even British Caledonian had originally wanted to offer its unfortunately-named

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'mini-prix' fares on far more routes than this.

The airlines are prepared to offer fares as low as £15.50 single London-Paris or £27.50 single London-Madrid. Admittedly the new services would restrict time of departure; but they still represent a genuine attempt to offer reasonably-priced tickets which are not hedged in by prior booking conditions of three weeks or more.

And Laker's scheme would use planes like buses, picking people up as they go – between (say) London-Paris-Athens-Frankfurt-London, providing a much better utilisation of costly aircraft than shuttling back and forth between two cities.

Initially the CAA's decision seemed to show that the powers-that-be continue to defend the existing system of scheduled European air fares tailored to the needs of the expense account business traveller. But there are indications now that the CAA and the Department of Trade – which is responsible for the negotiations with other governments on air services – are adopting a policy of extreme caution because the UK's EEC partners are opposing any reforms. Five of the six modest 'mini-prix' services BCal is proposing look like being blocked by the Austrian and German Governments leaving just Helsinki as a route. The French Government has already turned down BCal's plan to offer cheap fares on London-Paris and a similar £20 'Channelhopper' fare which was to be offered by British Airways from April. This left Trade Secretary John Nott moaning about the 'protectionism of our partners'. What, he asked, was the essential difference between the French selling Renault cars in the UK and British airlines selling cheaper fares in France?

As far as the UK's EEC partners are concerned, the answer seems to be 'a big difference'. Despite the fact that the Treaty of Rome says that air transport should come under the Community's rules encouraging free competition, the member governments are guarding the rights to say who may pick up passengers on their soil as jealously as ever. And even countries like Germany, which like to push the argument that market forces must be allowed to operate within the EEC, have no qualms about excluding air transport.

Five-bullet mystery of policeman's death

Duncan Campbell writes from Hong Kong: The Royal Hong Kong Police have suffered a serious setback after a coroner's jury refused last week to return a verdict of suicide on a former police inspector. The inspector, John MacLennan, was found dead in his flat early in January, shot five times with a police .38 Colt revolver. Officially, until the coroner's jury returned an open verdict, his death was 'suicide'. MacLennan's death is a savage reminder of the style of operation of the notoriously corrupt Hong Kong police. At the centre of the affair is a police campaign against homosexuality; MacLennan was about to be arrested, it was said, by a Special Investigation Unit, which hunted down homosexuals. But the police campaign is more a means of stabilising police power in the colony, than an actual piece of law enforcement. In this enterprise, the police have collaborated with the Triad, criminal syndicates procuring youths, and have thus ensnared several government officials in compromising circumstances. One of the victims of this conspiracy is an effeminate former judge of the colony, who left Hong Kong with considerable speed in 1979, after he fell out with the police.

The police venture had two objectives: first to pursue minor offenders against Hong Kong's oppressive sexual laws; and second to render more highly placed officials liable to pressure – from the police. Those who complied were secure. One person who did not give in to this racket was an English lawyer, Howard Lindsay. As a result, he was put on trial for homosexual offences last year.

The dead police inspector, on the other hand, was probably not a homosexual at all. He *had* been the victim of a homosexual frame-up attempt two years before, which had failed. Nevertheless, he was sacked from the police force, and only reinstated after a personal intervention from the Governor, which followed considerable lobbying on his behalf. The most likely motive for MacLennan's murder would have been the knowledge he acquired of the whole conspiracy during his service with the local Special Branch. He had been involved in a number of investigations of homosexuals in government service as security risks.

MacLennan's body was discovered during the day by a party from the Special Investigation Unit who had gone to arrest him, it was said in court. A suicide note and a revolver were discovered. According to the police evidence, the flat was completely sealed when they entered, every door and window being locked. On this basis, two police pathologists and an outside expert vouched that MacLennan must have killed himself.

The original story released by the police was rather different from the carefully constructed version presented in court. MacLennan was originally said to have been discovered by his maid and there was no mention of multiple shots. However, information about the five shots was leaked, and in consequence last week's elaborate construction had to be mounted.

A string of police witnesses swear that they identified MacLennan's handwriting on a suicide note. They may have been right. No-one, however, commented on the extraordinary wording of the note, which does not sound like the phraseology or style of a native English speaker about to shoot himself: 'Please, please tell my family that this was an accident and I was a good police officer'.

The new statesman

Bruce Page writes: Paul Johnson, who was editor of the NEW STATESMAN from 1965 to 1970, has left the board of the Statesman and Nation Publishing Co, because he is taking up an academic assignment in America. Mr Johnson leaves with 'nothing but affection' for the NS; rumours that he is departing for the US as part of an exchange with Professor Milton Friedman have been firmly discounted.

Anna Coote

TUC backs positive action

TRADE UNION POLICY on equal opportunity took an unusually radical turn last week, when the TUC Women's Conference approved a draft report setting out detailed recommendations for positive discrimination in education, training and employment. It amounts to a formal recognition by the TUC that equality can't be achieved by passing laws which prohibit discrimination against women; and when the report has been polished up and approved by Congress, as it almost certainly will be, it will commit trade unions to an entirely new approach. Instead of just railing against employers' bad practices, they could find themselves negotiating positive measures in favour of women, aimed at changing basic patterns of employment.

Tackling schools first, the report says that sex discrimination, which is still 'widespread', is due largely to 'entrenched attitudes on the part of educators, administrators, parents, and pupils and students themselves'. It calls for 'compensatory measures . . . at all levels of education to ensure that girls and women receive the same opportunities as boys and men'. School curricula should be restructured, it says, and teachers should have in-service training to 'enable them to identify discriminatory practices and widen opportunities for girls'. Schools should be given resources to organise special courses to counteract the effects of 'restrictive options systems' in the past. Teacher training colleges should make sure that all trainee teachers are aware 'of classroom traditions which reinforce sex-stereotyping and the factors (curriculum organisation, timetabling) which lead to restrictive choices'. Schools should adopt positive policies of using non-sexist children's books and demand more suitable material from publishers. Women workers should have the right to paid educational leave . . . and so on.

A wide range of special training schemes is recommended – especially in the field of manual work, 'to provide basic training which will enable women to tackle unfamiliar tasks'. Industrial Training Boards, the report suggests, 'should be required to negotiate with employers forms of training that discriminate positively in favour of women, such as the provision of 3-6 month bridging and conversion courses that give girls the necessary scientific and technical background to train for more skilled jobs'. At the workplace, unions must negotiate equal opportunities programmes, which 'lay down clear practices and procedures for anticipating and countering discrimination against women'.

> The more such policies are drawn up within the framework of collective bargaining, the more likely it is that unions will be able to monitor and review the process of implementation.

Unions have been invited to submit ideas for improving the final lists of recommendations. It is hard to predict how much opposition the report will encounter when it is put to Congress (without whose approval it cannot become TUC policy). Positive discrimination – or affirmative action as it is known in the United States – is a relatively new idea to the UK, and has only gained credence with female trade unionists after they have had five years to witness the impotence of the Sex Discrimination Act. Some unions, judging by their achievements to date, have yet to acknowledge that it is a bad thing to discriminate against women; and it is a long stride from there to recognising the need for discrimination in favour of women.

Last year, the TU Congress endorsed a ten-point charter for positive action within trade unions – which includes such provisions as special seats for women on unions' decision-making bodies and advisory committees at national and local levels to 'ensure that the special interests of women members are protected'.

Clearly, the two policies go hand in hand: unions in which women are poorly represented among negotiators are unlikely to make it a priority to establish positive discrimination programmes at the workplace. The ten-point charter went through on the nod at last year's Congress, without any debate, and only one or two unions have begun to act on it. It will be a long time before any tangible results are felt: but at least the charter and the report will provide useful bargaining counters for women trying to press for change in the future.

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'Aunt Annie's bomb factory'

In October and November 1974 a series of IRA bombs exploded in pubs used by off-duty soldiers in Guildford and Woolwich. Seven people were killed and dozens more injured. Shortly afterwards 21 people were killed in the Birmingham pub bombings. Anti-Irish feeling ran very high and the pressure on the police to catch the bombers and put them behind bars was intense.

On 3 December 1974 seven people were arrested in London and in January 1976 were convicted of possession of explosives in connection with the Guildford and Woolwich bombings. All seven pleaded not guilty and have consistently maintained their innocence, one of them, 56-year-old Guiseppe Conlon, until his death in January this year.

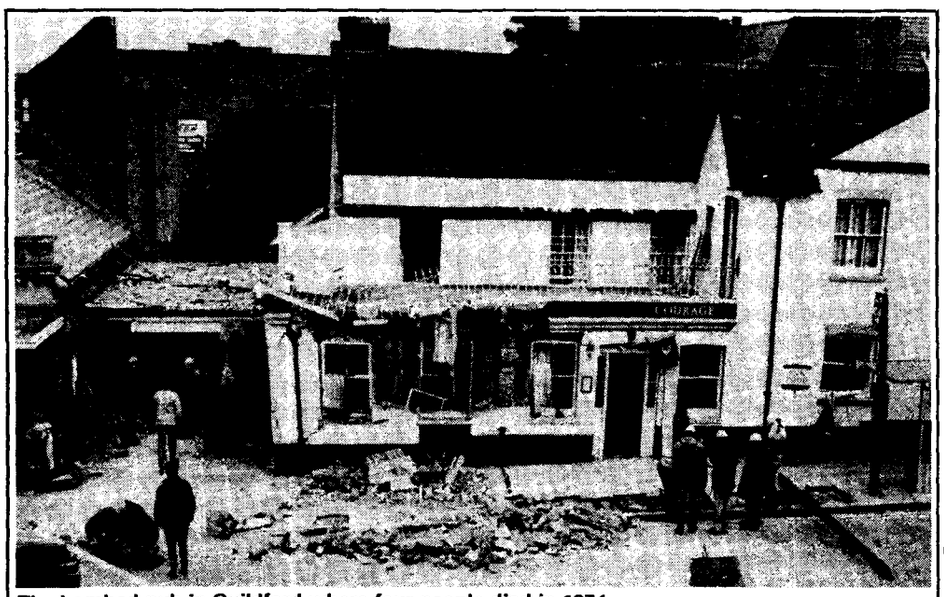
The case has been taken up by, among others, John Biggs Davidson MP, Gerry Fitt, MP for West Belfast, and the National Council for Civil Liberties. The Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, has said he will 'reconsider the case' if new evidence emerges. It now seems very likely that this will happen. Of Conlon's six co-defendants four are still serving sentences ranging from eight to fourteen years. The evidence used to secure their conviction consisted of forensic tests known as thin layer chromatography tests (TLC), which identify various explosives. At the trial the forensic scientist who invented the test, John Yallop, appeared for the defence and attacked the use of the tests by the prosecution as 'unscientific and incompetent'. Dr Yallop is now preparing a paper on the use of TLC tests which the NCCL believes will provide the new evidence necessary if Mr Whitelaw decides to reopen the case.

There will, however, be considerable pressure on the Home Secretary not to reopen inquiries. The NCCL estimates that there are up to 25 Irish prisoners currently serving sentences in British jails for various explosives offences who were convicted on the strength of the now disputed TLC tests. The prospect of reconsidering all their cases would present a political hornet's nest which the Home Secretary is unlikely to relish. Here GAVIN ESLER reports on the mystery of 'Aunt Annie's bomb factory'.

ON 23 JANUARY this year a chronically sick Belfast man, Guiseppe Conlon, died in Hammersmith Hospital. He had been transferred from Wormwood Scrubs prison where he had served almost half of a 12-year sentence for possessing explosives in the aftermath of the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings.

Conlon, who was 56 and had suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis since 1963, came from the Falls Road area of Belfast. He was arrested in North London on his first visit there for more than 17 years and after spending only about seven hours in the capital. He was to have stayed in a house in Harlesden which later became known in the press as 'Aunt Annie's bomb factory'. For a bomb factory it was rather inadequate. Despite intensive searches of the house and surrounding areas no explosives were ever found there.

What brought Conlon to London was his son, Gerry, who had been arrested at the family home in Belfast, taken to England, charged and ultimately convicted with three others of the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings. Almost immediately after his son's arrest Guiseppe Conlon decided that, despite his illness, he should travel to London to arrange the young man's defence. He saw his doctor and caught the overnight boat train to London on 2 December 1974, arriving in London at lunchtime the following day. Conlon had planned to stay at the home of his brother-in-law, Hugh Maguire, but was unable to contact him by telephone. Reluctantly, he decided to stay with another brother-in-law, Paddy Maguire and his wife, Annie, at their house in Third Avenue, Harlesden.



The bombed pub in Guildford where four people died in 1974

Camera Press

The reason for his reluctance was simple. Paddy Maguire liked a drink and, shortly after his arrival, Guiseppe Conlon was standing him drinks in a local pub. According to a statement he made later, Conlon then slept for a few hours that afternoon and Annie Maguire made a meal. They were joined by the Maguire children, Vincent (then 16) and Patrick (13) and the lodger, Sean Smyth. A friend called Pat O'Neill arrived unexpectedly. His wife was having a difficult pregnancy and he wanted Annie Maguire to come and see her.

During this time the house was being watched by the police. One of those who had been accused with Gerry Conlon, Guiseppe's son, of the Guildford and Woolwich bombings had allegedly confessed that he had learnt to make bombs from 'Conlon's Aunt Annie' and the police believed they were about to clear all the remaining bombers. They had already arrested Hugh Maguire – hence Conlon's unanswered telephone calls. Hugh Maguire was released the following week and has never faced charges of any kind.

That night Guiseppe Conlon, Paddy and Annie Maguire, their two teenage sons and their lodger were arrested. All seven were later convicted of possessing explosives and all have consistently denied the charge.

At the trial there was one piece of evidence on which, both prosecution and defence agreed, the entire case rested. Forensic tests had shown minute traces of nitroglycerine under the nails and on the hands of the accused, with the exception of 'Conlon's Aunt Annie' herself. A trace was allegedly found on one of Annie Maguire's gloves.

Otherwise the prosecution case appeared thin. Despite police surveillance and searches of the house and the surrounding areas, no explosives were ever found. The defence questioned why it was necessary for seven people to handle explosives which promptly disappeared. How was it that they were sufficiently careful to avoid even a trace in the house and yet were stupid enough to leave traces on their hands? Nitroglycerine, when handled, passes through the skin and into the bloodstream causing a characteristic and nasty headache known as 'NG head'. Why was Annie Maguire shrewd enough to wear gloves herself yet allow her sick brother-in-law and her 13-year-old son, Patrick, to use their bare hands? Stranger was to come.

THE MAN WHO voiced the most significant objections to the prosecution case was the man whose tests were being used by the prosecution. John Yallop had worked at Woolwich Arsenal for more than 30 years before leaving to set up his own consultancy. During his time at Woolwich he had developed a 'thin layer chromatography' (TLC) test to help identify various explosives.

Swabs from the hands and nail clippings are placed in a solution. Traces of explosives will dissolve and when a spot of solution is placed on a treated plate it will rise in a column. If nitroglycerine is present a pink spot will form at a certain measurable level.

According to the prosecution, tests on six of

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the accused and Annie Maguire's glove showed traces of nitroglycerine. According to John Yallop, who had been senior to the prosecution's experts when they had worked together at Woolwich, that is unlikely. The prosecution carried out only *one* TLC test on the 'traces' and were unable to cross-check for lack of material. They forgot to photograph their results and, since the TLC test destroys its evidence, further checking was impossible. Crucially, Yallop noted that TLC tests can be contaminated by common household substances like washing powder, or even cigarette smoke, making corroborating tests imperative.

In helping the defence to prepare their case Yallop wrote a short explanatory paper on the TLC test. In it he says of the prosecution's results 'No competent scientist could do other than conclude that the hypothesis is incorrect, namely that the pink spot is not due to nitroglycerine. To do otherwise is to be unscientific, illogical and pigheaded.'

Alastair Logan, the Guildford lawyer who took up Guiseppe Conlon's case on appeal is equally forthright: 'I am unhappy that in a case of this magnitude the man who was given the task of analysing the samples was an 18-year-old boy who had spent, I think, three months at Woolwich Arsenal before he carried out these tests and was described by the judge at the trial as an apprentice.' Apprentice or not, the prosecution case was accepted and all seven accused were found guilty. In Northern Ireland, where judges try terrorist crimes without a jury the result, ironically, might have been different. Ted Jones, Conlon's solicitor in Belfast, makes the point that when considering forensic evidence 'Judges in Northern Ireland have shown themselves aware of innocent contamination.'

BUT IF THERE are doubts about Guiseppe Conlon, even more of a puzzle is presented by the background and known loyalties of his co-accused. Paddy Maguire (sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment, the maximum) was an ex-British soldier who had lived in England for more than 20 years. His wife Annie (also sentenced to 14 years) was a staunch supporter of the Conservative Party and there were pictures of the royal family and the Union Jack in her house. Her sons Vincent (sentenced to 5 years) and Patrick (4 years) consider themselves Londoners and speak with London accents. Vincent was planning to join the Metropolitan Police – an ambition now abandoned – and several police career brochures were found in 'Aunt Annie's bomb factory' at the time of the arrest.

The case of Pat O'Neill, the man whose wife was having a difficult pregnancy, was equally odd. Harry Disley, another Guildford solicitor, was assigned to O'Neill on a legal aid order. Disley describes himself as 'no left-winger, certainly no revolutionary' and he had no interest in Ireland: 'I'd never even been there.' Like the rest of Guildford, when he was called to meet his client, he assumed he was going to meet an IRA thug. 'There was a considerable amount of propagandising by the local gendarmerie as to what disreputable characters all these people were. I suppose most of us thought we were going to deal with some sort of monster quite unknown to us.'

In fact, says Disley, O'Neill was utterly bewildered: 'He just hadn't a clue what was happening to him. He didn't know what the hell it was about.' O'Neill, arrested on a Tuesday, was released the next day and immediately went back to work, another pointer, Disley believes, to his innocence, since it would have been easy for him to escape to the Irish Republic if he had been involved in a terrorist plot. On the following Saturday, again to his bewilderment, he was picked up, charged, convicted and sentenced to 12 years. This was later reduced on appeal to eight years for a role described as 'peripheral'.

The judge who presided at the trial of Guiseppe Conlon, Pat O'Neill, Sean Smyth and the Maguires was Mr Justice Donaldson. A few months earlier he had also been the judge at the trial of Gerry Conlon, where he first heard of 'Aunt Annie's bomb factory.'

For the Guildford lawyers the experience of defending Irish clients in English courts on terrorist charges has been uncomfortable, if salutary. Alastair Logan believes that the seven arrested in connection with the alleged bomb factory – one of whom is dead and four of whom are still in prison – were neither terrorists nor terrorist sympathisers. Harry Disley says: 'It's been a very chastening experience and a grave disappointment. It's induced a certain cynicism towards my job that wasn't there before. I'm disappointed with our system which I'd supposed naively was more or less infallible.

Gavin Esler is a reporter with BBC Northern Ireland's Spotlight *programme.*

ECONOMIC MONITOR

Edited by David Blackaby

Causes of housing shortage

THE EXISTING system of mortgage finance causes a housing shortage. That is the conclusion which can be drawn from some recent work on the effects of inflation when housing finance is provided under a fixed nominal-payment mortgage system, because under such a system the monthly payment increases more than proportionately with the rate of inflation. For example, consider a mortgage of £30,000, repayable over 30 years. If the rate of inflation were zero and the interest rate 3 per cent, the annual payments would amount to £1,517. With a 6 per cent rate of inflation (and thus an interest rate of 9 per cent) the repayment would almost double to £2,895. Although the real cost of these payments will decline with inflation the individual is still faced with paying out large sums in the early years of the mortgage. The effect of this will be to reduce demand for, and therefore the price of, housing, which then causes a fall in the construction of new houses. A simulation exercise demonstrates that the stock of housing in the US in 1973 was considerably lower (about one year's construction activity) than would have been the case under an 'indexed' scheme of mortgage finance. (R. Apps)

Inflation, Mortgages and Housing, J. R. Kearl, *Journal of Political Economy*, October 1979.

Problems of Soviet economy

CONTRARY TO official information the USSR has been running a budget deficit of increasing proportions and a deep financial crisis is now developing, according to a recent study. The serious consequences of this arise because of the fundamental differences between Soviet and Western economies. Additional demand created through budget deficits can be used in Western economies to employ surplus resources. For the Soviet economy with full employment and planned prices and output, additional demand can be devastating, as excess demand in the form of money balances cannot be eliminated by inflation.

While the growth of savings reflects an increase in well-being, in the Soviet context it is evidence of another phenomenon. The Soviet population does not have any opportunities for investing; all savings are intended for future consumption. So Birman concludes that all savings are forced; they grow and grow rapidly primarily because people are unable to spend. As a result the aspiration to higher wages is now a poor stimulus for the growth of output and redistribution of labour, making planning not only difficult but ineffective. Increases in consumer prices and partial liquidation or freezing of assets can be expected in the near future to redress the balance.

The Financial Crisis in the USSR. I. Birman, *Soviet Studies*, January 1980.

More work for women

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM suggests that more frequent resignation by women compared to men is an important factor in their lower relative earnings. Firms are both less likely to hire women for jobs which require substantial training outlays and will pay lower wages for equal work to offset the cost of frequent resignations.

Evidence suggests that resignations to move within the labour force are more frequent for males, while exits from the labour force are greater for women. Lewis's interviews with personnel directors of 18 medium-sized Austrian firms suggest that it is over-emphasis on labour force exits which leads them to underestimate the quit rates of males while exaggerating those of females. This misconception by firms may lead to behaviour which will reinforce their attitude. If employers exaggerate the differences in the resignation rate, women may be paid less and promoted less frequently. Such behaviour would result in even higher resignation rates for women and a vicious circle would be formed. This circle may be initiated because society encourages women to lower their initial career aspirations. Equal wages would go a long way to breaking the circle.

Comparative Quit Rates of Men and Women, D. E. Lewis, *Journal of Industrial Relations*, September 1979.

A case for free trade

THE STABILITY of food grain supply and prices is of continuous concern to many governments. In the 1970s, fluctuations of grain prices and the threat of famine in years of major crop failures became a major preoccupation of the international community. The effect of international trade and trade policies on domestic food grain supply and prices is often thought to have caused depression in the agricultural production of the importing country, increasing the dependence on exporters and exposing them to higher risk of shortages of supply.

A simulation exercise is used to analyse the effects of international trade on the parameters of the domestic market for food grains — prices, quantities available for consumption, the fiscal budget and the balance of payments. The data, for a 30-year period, was chosen to represent a country such as India. The results, when evaluating various policies, lead to the conclusion that for most countries, particularly developing countries, free trade and avoidance of protectionist policies would be a more powerful instrument of stabilising domestic food grain prices and ensuring the continuity of supplies than any reasonably sized buffer stock. For example, a measure of the variability of the quantity of grain available for consumption is 6.9 m. tons in the closed economy compared with 3.9 m. tons under free trade. (P. J. Dawson)

Food Price and Supply Stabilization: National Buffer Stocks and Trade Policies, David Bigman & Shlomo Reutlinger, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* (61), November 1979.

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Every name to be on file

The feeling is growing – it was articulated again on Monday by Michael Meacher MP in the *Guardian* – that the police force is on the way to becoming an independent power in the land. Organisational changes have loosened the police from traditional social links, and from old and informal means of democratic supervision. The logic of technology, most of which remains unknown and undiscussed, is what is changing the nature of British police work, leading the police to supervise society from a distance, rather than regulate it from within. Here, in an extract from a new study, *Policing the Police. DUNCAN CAMPBELL describes the increasing role of electronic information-retrieval in police intelligence gathering, and its resemblance to military procedures. The irony, as the experience of Northern Ireland shows, is that such massive surveillance operations have no obvious pay-off in terms of social and political harmony. If the British police continue towards dependence upon computerised information-technology, the results are not likely to be beneficial for anybody except computer manufacturers.**

****Policing the Police, Vol. 2,* Peter Hain (ed), Martin Kettle, Duncan Campbell and Joanna Rollo. John Calder, 27 March, £4.50.**

DURING the last twenty years, police forces in the UK have gone through a remarkable series of reforms. A collection of separate county and borough constabularies, with a loose centre at Scotland Yard, has been reformed into just 52 forces, with a high degree of integration and co-operation. Each force now operates sophisticated communications systems for deploying police resources, and participates in the collection of considerable quantities of information for local and national records. The nature of police operations has changed considerably, diminishing local autonomy and accountability in favour of precise and rapid central control. The emphasis in investigation has changed from evidence gathering after the commission of crime to intelligence gathering in advance of any particular crime being committed. In this 'pre-emptive' view, any citizen, certainly any socially uncharacteristic citizen, is a target for suspicion and observation. This quite explicit development in police planning has virtually put the whole of society under surveillance.

In one sense, this has always been the case. The local constables and detectives who, before the introduction of Unit Beat policing, were rigidly attached to particular areas would normally make it their business to be as well informed as possible. But they themselves were a part of the community they policed: the forces for which they worked were smaller and, potentially, at least, more responsive to local control and accountability through the Watch Committees of local councils.

But the changes instituted by central government have eroded this accountability, and created police forces which instead place society at arm's length – and under observation. Substantial evidence of this development can be found by examining the role of police information and intelligence gathering. The advent of major new computer systems for storing police information and intelligence has rightly aroused widespread concern. The best known of these systems is the Police National Computer (PNC) in London, which is one of the most advanced systems for disseminating police information in the world.

But a variety of other major and minor projects has grown up in the wake of the PNC, including a project to place on computer the records of the Special Branch and other police national intelligence units. This development has received a major boost from the conflict in Northern Ireland, where the army's campaign against the IRA has provided political support for the instigation of extraordinary systems of surveillance and control over the entire population. The army's records are now on computer too.

Traditional military doctrines on the importance of good prior intelligence – acceptable, perhaps, when aimed for brief periods at wartime enemies, but now turned inwards on much of the British population – have encouraged police units like the Special Branch to make advances in the same direction. One local force, the Thames Valley, has already placed its local intelligence records on a computer.

The most important change from the local point of view was the introduction of Unit Beat policing and it is the impact of new information technologies on this system which needs to be understood.

In Unit Beat policing, the domain of a police force is divided up into areas under the control of a team of detectives and uniformed officers. A less publicised aspect of the reform is the new arrangements for reporting and record-keeping. At the centre of the system is a new post, a collator, who receives the daily reports of patrol officers and detectives, together with copies of all other communications to and from his police station, and from these builds up comprehensive indexes of people, addresses, vehicles, incidents and crimes which had come to the attention of the police. No statutory power existed for this (nor indeed for many other police information gathering activities): it was merely not prohibited.

THE COLLATOR is, however, better called a local intelligence officer. He represents at the local level the same type of prior intelligence gathering and surveillance as is carried out by major squads such as the National Drugs Intelligence Unit, the Fraud Squad and the Special Branch. The late Sixties reforms of police organisation put collators to work in every local divisional and sub-divisional police station. Their resources and methods do vary from place to place, as does the responsibility placed on them or the frequency with which they are consulted. Nonetheless, the collators have now created a coordinated nationwide network of basic intelligence records.

There is clear evidence that the basic motive behind the collator system was to collect information on as many people as possible who cross police paths. This will include not just persons suspected or convicted of criminal offences as well as their families, friends and 'associates', but also politically active people, and even those who are the victims of crime, or people who have complained to the police.

The British police are yet a long way from possessing or exercising the undisciplined and repressive excesses which are common in totalitarian regimes. But the demands of police spokesmen, at public forums and to official bodies, indicate an underlying intent – witting or not – to go in that direction.

The new aggregated police forces have become remote from public control – often, indeed, physically remote, setting up operational headquarters away from major towns. For them, the PNC at present provides a basic and very rapid check on up to 4 million people, and 19 million vehicles and their owners. As well as providing basic factual information, such checks will reveal if the person concerned has a criminal record – however old, however trivial – and will also indicate if some policeman or unit has an interest in the person or vehicle.

This aspect of the PNC project helps to draw what amounts to a net across society. The activity of stop-checks, for which no statutory legal power exists unless the police officer suspects a specific crime, now constitutes a basic part of the surveillance system. These checks are not only encouraged by official police doctrine, but in some forces at least are carried out as a minimum duty if no crime is being dealt with. An officer who does not carry out a sufficient number of checks is under-performing.

The information passed in response to a police inquiry, whether from the PNC or local intelligence, is intended to assist and help determine the policeman's course of action. If the message is that someone is to be arrested for an offence, then the course of action taken is obvious, and the fact of passing the information is wholly unobjectionable. But where

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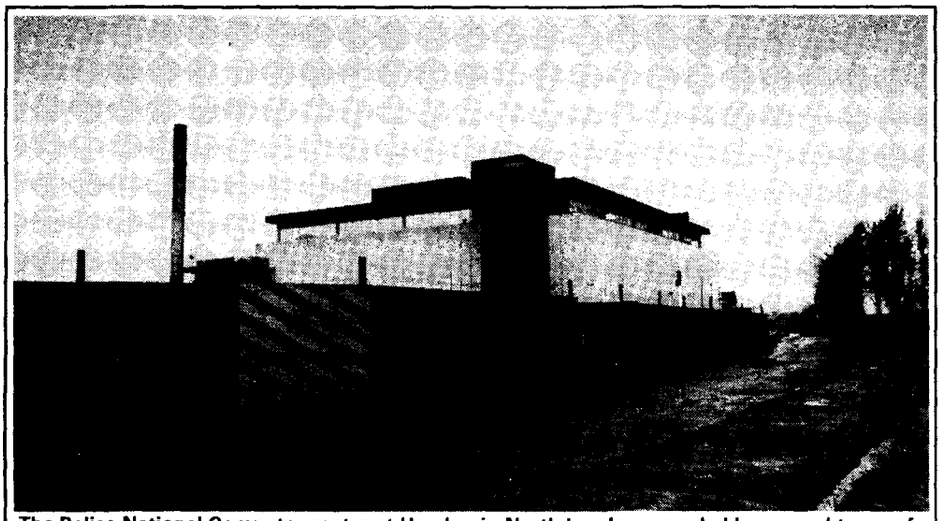

Michael Abrahams

The Police National Computer centre at Hendon in North London, guarded by several types of security alarm and crash barriers. The designers of this secure centre were clearly aware of the PNC's political significance.

a previous conviction or, say, a record of political or industrial campaigning is indicated, while no offence is currently being committed, it is both offensive and unnecessary that such information should so readily be available.

A few leaks of information held in police files have more than substantiated the case for concern about the information held. There is no denial from the police that both local and national files will and do already hold records on people who have never been convicted of any offence. Files which have been leaked have shown that, apart from this, it is certainly the practice of local collators to record on an individual's files details of every type of policing activity concerning that person. This will include stop-checks, hearsay and gossip, charges resulting in a caution or an acquittal, simple cautions, policemen's and others' suspicions, and even such things as notes about the person standing bail for a third party.

It is offensive to individual privacy that such files should be allowed to be maintained at all in the haphazard way in which they have been created. Equally offensive is the practice of opening files willy-nilly on anyone whose name has appeared on a police record of any sort, and then continually cross-referencing and up-dating the file with any new information. It is manifestly a threat to the liberty of the subject when police behaviour and attitudes towards an individual are determined by the contents of remote files of unknown reliability and accuracy – but extremely rapid electronic access – rather than by a policeman's own judgment and obedience to his task under the law.

THE STOLEN VEHICLE INDEX is perhaps the most revealing example of the actual nature of the PNC. The idea of centrally recording stolen vehicles is clearly unobjectionable in principle, and the related attributes of the PNC's fast communication systems are an obvious boon. It therefore comes as a surprise to discover that only one quarter of the PNC's 'stolen vehicles' entries are actually stolen. Information on this comes from a 1976 Home Office Conference, attended by foreign police officers and computer specialists: the Home Office wanted to set up 'firm links between (police) research groups . . . and make possible scientific co-operation between them'.

A paper at the conference by J. R. Cubberley and D. Blakey of the PNCU reported that an average of 120,000 entries on the Suspect/Stolen Vehicles file were recorded for one of eleven reasons. These ranged from 'having been stolen (about 30,000) to being owned by an active criminal or having been impounded by the police . . . for obstruction.'

The other reasons for being listed have not been explicitly published, although some details are available. Stolen and impounded vehicles account for two reasons; additional reasons include vehicles in use for police purposes, vehicles which are, or whose owners are, suspected of having committed an offence, and vehicles of 'long term interest' to the police. Two larger sections of this file are therefore concerned with stolen vehicles and vehicles used by the police – these perhaps amount to just over half the file at that time, say 65,000 entries. Most of the rest are either the 'SUS' categories or the 'INT' categories, denoting suspicion or 'long term interest'. One senior police officer has confirmed that in his (provincial) force, about 500 vehicles would have been recorded as of interest. Since there are 52 police forces in Britain, this figure would seem to confirm the estimate that at least one-third of the 'Stolen' Vehicles file is in fact concerned with vehicles which are under surveillance; whose whereabouts are to be reported but whose drivers are not necessarily to be made aware that surveillance has taken place.

Another unusual, and secret mechanism for surveillance, was described to me by a former PNC programmer. Additional information can be inserted into the record of a vehicle in either the Stolen Vehicle or the Vehicle Owner's index to indicate that the Special Branch have an interest in the vehicle. If an inquiry is made on its record, a message concerning the inquiry is sent to the Special Branch at New Scotland Yard at the same time as the inquiry is answered. The local police force making the inquiry is given no indication that it has been flagged to Special Branch in this way. A bell is rung in the Special Branch duty office to ensure that the message receives attention. This system was justified to programmers as being intended to protect the SB's own vehicles from police interference if they were behaving unusually; but this was clearly not the true reason for the facility. It has been suggested by police sources that similar warning facilities are now available to other major police units such as the Regional Crime Squads and the National Drugs Intelligence Unit.

The computers originally provided for the PNC apparently proved inadequate to meet demand, and new, more powerful machines were put in two years ago.

The new computers were claimed to be needed because the 'limit for the amount of information it could hold had been reached'. An alternative explanation was given to me by the Home Office in September 1979: 'the (existing) processors were incapable of dealing with the sheer weight of numbers of inquiries being received'. They suggested that the PNC had already become overloaded with inquiries by early 1977, claimed that this had been predicted some time before, and said that a new order had been put in hand over a year before it was announced. The newer processors would keep the average response time per inquiry down to 5 seconds.

Whichever version is accurate, the PNC's capacity for storing information does in any case seem to have been underutilised in comparison with early estimates of capacity. The number of records held in 1979 was considerably less than the 40 million anticipated in 1972; the actual level was about 30.2 million. A large part of the shortfall was caused by the reduction in the growth of vehicle ownership in the mid-Seventies.

The 1978 announcement also revealed that the Wanted/Missing Persons Index and the Disqualified Driver Index could not then go on the PNC because of the alleged under-capacity.

Why is the PNC 'full up'? Certainly, the present rate of transactions is staggering. The latest published figure is 160,000 messages a day, or about 58.4 million messages a year. The same scale of use is indicated in a letter from the Assistant Chief Constable of the West Midlands Police to the *Police Review* in which he stated that, 'in excess of 100,000 PNC transactions were made by (my) force during April 1979 alone'. The number of inquiries made each year in Birmingham alone (1.2 million), or those made in Britain as a whole, is comparable to the total size of the population. These figures dramatically indicate the extent to which the PNC has put much of society under surveillance.

A NEW 'cross reference' system was added to the main PNC facilities in 1977. It is designed to cross-reference numbers of criminal records at Scotland Yard with the corresponding dossiers at regional CROs and Force headquarters. So far as is known, the work of cross-referencing (The 'RX' inquiry system) has not been completed. The Home Office denies that this will involve linkage of pointers to collator records: the description of the 'RX' system given in a 1978 PNC booklet is, however, more ambiguous:

> This facility permits reference numbers of criminal records held centrally to be cross-referenced to local and regional police records, thus indicating additional sources of detailed information.

The relevant references will be built up in 'several years'.

The PNC is certainly stocked with features which are very far removed from the anodyne descriptions of the system supplied to Parliament, press or public. There is no mention of the warning bells to Special Branch, of the 'cross-linking' of associates, or of the small

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proportion of stolen cars on the so-called Stolen Vehicles Index. Even since the 1976 figures showing that only 25 per cent of vehicles on the file were stolen, that file has more than doubled in size, to over 250,000 entries. This suggests that a far greater proportion of suspect and other vehicles under surveillance are now on the file. Besides this, public relations for the PNC stresses that the information now on the computer has always been available to the police, and emphasise the (undoubted) success of the PNC in detecting greater numbers of stolen cars. *But no previous police system generated 58 million inquiries every year on more than 20 million people, their vehicles and personal records.* The PNC has created a qualitatively different situation for the individual from that which existed a decade before. The Home Office itself, wearing a different hat, pointed out the precise dangers of this happening in their first white paper on *Computers and Privacy*. Computer personal data systems have the following 'practical implications for privacy' in that they:

(1) facilitate the maintenance of extensive record systems and the retention of data in those systems;
(2) can make data easily and quickly accessible from many distant points;
(3) make it possible for data to be transferred quickly from one information system to another;
(4) make it possible for data to be combined in ways which might not otherwise be practicable;
(5) because the data is stored, processed and often transmitted in a form which is not directly intelligible, few people may know what is in the records, and what is happening to them.

Parkinson's Law-like, the use of the PNC has now apparently expanded to fill all its available capacity ahead of time, a phenomenon police often refer to rather whimsically as 'suppressed demand'.

THE POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER may have been developed and put into operation in conditions of considerable secrecy. But compared with the information available on the 'C' Department computer of the Metropolitan Police, it has positively been bathed in floodlights ('C' is responsible for all the Yard's criminal investigation and related work, including the Special Branch).

In Autumn 1973 the Management Services Department of the Metropolitan Police started to assess the possibility of computerising all the main records of the units in 'C' Department. This study led directly to the computer now in operation, which will store over 1.3 million names by 1985: the vast majority having been entered on the computer by the Special Branch.

The specification document for the 'C' Department computer is one of the few sources of public information about it. It provides remarkable evidence of the way in which the police see their new intelligence gathering role. In describing the existing manual filing systems which have to be put on computer, there is scarcely a mention of the word 'criminal' or 'crimes'. The Immigration, Special Branch and Fraud Squad files do not mention 'criminals' at all; the Drugs Intelligence Unit refers only to a small section of 1,000 out of its 75,000 files – under two per cent of the files held. And, it is clear, the situation will become worse, not better.

The total number of files in all five sections would, by 1985, cover an estimated 2.03 million people (1.343 million in 1974). That figure is quite separate from the 3.8 million *bona fide* criminal records of the CRO, though in some cases there would be a sizeable overlap.

These records are quite separate again from those held in London divisional and subdivisional police stations by collators – the 'local intelligence' records. These must number between 200,000 and 600,000. All told, the Metropolitan Police alone must have between 3.5 and 5.5 million people on its various files.

It is small wonder that the drafters of the document, in projecting police file holdings forward from January 1974 chose an unusual 11 year period on which to base their predictions. It is tempting to wonder if they were privately aware of how closely a ten-year plan to January 1984 would have paralleled George Orwell's fears.

The system was brought into service in 1979, under the joint supervision of the Metropolitan Police Management Services Department, JADPU, and the government's Central Computer Agency. In order to meet the project timing, provincial Special Branch officers who regularly spend three-month tours of duty in Scotland Yard at the SB's 'National Joint Unit', were employed during much of 1978 solely in coding personal dossiers ready for the computer. Although development and the loading of files continues, there is little doubt that the 'C' Department computer will indeed be working well and on time by January 1984.

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The battle for the mythical middle

CLAUDIA WRIGHT, the NEW STATESMAN's correspondent in Washington has an enviable track record in forecasting the course of the current American Presidential election. In June last year she correctly forecast that Carter would survive the Special Prosecutor's investigation of his peanut warehouse and 1976 election campaign. In November, even before Kennedy's campaign began, she said he was unconvincing and inarticulate and was unlikely to defeat Carter. In January, she said few would approve of Connally and last month forecast that Bush's popularity wouldn't last. Connally has gone and Kennedy and Bush are on the way out. Below Claudia Wright reviews the way Presidential campaigns are run and Carter's prospects of eventual victory.

AFTER A PARTICULARLY gory battle with the Romans at Asculum, the Greek King Pyrrhus exclaimed, as is widely remembered: 'One more such victory and we are lost.' From this point on, Pyrrhus gave his name to a contest whose victory is won at too great a cost. For future presidential contests, it may well be that Carter's name will describe a victory that is achieved despite apparent losses every step along the way. Carter has turned Pyrrhus on his head.

Consider these examples. Two weeks after announcing a grain embargo against the Soviet Union, which threw into sudden doubt the planting and financial prospects of corn-growers, Carter achieved a two-to-one victory over Kennedy in the corn-growing state of Iowa. In New Hampshire, a state which relies almost entirely for home heating and electricity on imported Middle Eastern oil, and which vehemently opposed Carter's abandonment last year of oil price controls, Democratic electors voted for the President over Kennedy, who had offered to reinstate price controls and increase home heating subsidies. Despite wide disbelief of Carter's disavowal of the United States vote against Israeli settlements at the UN Security Council, the President was able to trounce Kennedy in the Florida primary, where Jewish voters make up a substantial proportion of the electorate.

What kind of a contest is this, when the President appears more indomitable with each new fumble or fall, as inflation accelerates to record highs, and his foreign policy moves suffer what are, from the American point of view, unprecedented rebuffs? Can it ever have happened before that a President managed to defeat his opponent in every single regional, ethnic, and class group of the Democratic party, and yet, collectively, they turn around and stop just short of condemning his performance as President (approval in late February among registered Democrats was a slim 45 per cent to 42 per cent)?

The paradox of Carter's position is that he has appeared both so strong (compared to Kennedy and Brown on the Democratic Side, and Reagan, Bush, and the other Republican candidates), and yet so weak (compared to former President Gerald Ford) that Ford was almost forced into the race – kept out only by the lateness of the primary schedule, and by Reagan's considerable grip at this stage. Since disapproval of Carter's performance among Republicans is sharp – 79 per cent to 16 per cent - it is clear that a majority of voters in the nation think rather poorly of the man who, the polls also confirm, cannot be defeated by any of the candidates still in the race. The explanation for this is some clever manipulation of the technical possibilities of electioneering, and one old-fashioned gamble.

FOR YEARS it has been obvious that the two American political parties were on the skids. An increasingly large number of voters have failed to register as Democrat or Republican, or have been willing to switch from one side to another when it suited them. In the absence of diehard partisans, the oldtime political machines have not been the source of strategy, organisation or power they once were.

In place of the Party, the aspiring Presidential candidate now looks to a group of technicians to run his race. These are loosely affiliated to the main parties, but they must be financed by the candidate himself. They begin with a polling organisation and some test surveys. Their job is to identify the candidate's strengths and weaknesses, his appeal or lack of it, among the major groups of voters which he faces. Much as a medic pumps the lifeless body of an accident victim until a pulse is registered, these polls pump each ethnic, occupational, religious and racial group, the young and old, male, female and unconventional, until 'themes' emerge. These are not exactly policies, but carefully crafted symbols which can be interlarded with the candidate's rhetoric to evince special recognition and support among target groups, without necessarily antagonising others.

Once the pollsters have developed these themes, the media men go to work to produce the radio and television spots, films, cassette tapes, and mail kits whose distribution is carefully arranged by computer so that for every target suburb, city neighbourhood, ward and precinct in each state and region of the country only the correctly calculated message is delivered.

Naturally, a campaign along these lines is about nothing too detailed or specific. It is reaching for those 'levers', to use the jargon of the trade, with which the broadest popular response can be triggered. Occasionally, if he is lucky, a candidate can attract an unusual outpouring of support. Bush had his jackpot in the January caucuses in Iowa; Anderson in the Massachusetts primary. But the probabilities (as well as the prohibitive costs) are against repeating this success in one location after another. To keep going, the successful candidate needs to be able to command as many 'levers' as possible – to seem to be as many different things as there are groups around the country ready to vote, without appearing to be those things which might entice the inert, the apathetic or the wise to leave their homes to vote against. In short, the successful candidate for President has to capture 'The Middle'.

Every generation or so, the American political system has wiped out the socialist Left, so that the Middle is much further to the Right here than in most other parts of the world. Urban journalists imagine that the Middle is in a rural location, and North-Eastern journalists – in the narrow world of the American media, all journalists are from the North-East, either originally, currently or hopefully – imagine that the Middle is in the Mid-Western states, despite the fact that the region is durably Republican when the majority of the country is Democratic.

In point of fact, the Middle is simply a statistical invention, the product of those machines and experts who run political campaigns. It is whatever combination of political symbols can be made to succeed in as many primaries as are needed to elect the candidate on the first ballot of the party convention. In devising the right combination of symbols, the candidates start with their polls, as trusted a guide to the mythical Middle as the magnetic North is to a boy scout. The more money they can raise, the more polls and media tests and promotions they can afford. But as the campaign progresses and includes several contestants, each campaigning for the same middle, it is the local and national press which play a decisive role.

THE NATIONAL POLITICAL writers and editorialists identify which of the themes and which of the candidates strike the Middle most accurately. This is an altogether phoney ratiocination – it is nothing but the most subjective of judgments, picked up from Iowa cornpones, cab drivers, drunken stewardesses, elderly retirees, or whoever happens to collar

The cost of power

	Total campaign expenditure to Jan 31 (in millions of dollars)	Surplus (deficit) of cash receipts over debts as of Jan 31
Brown	1.546	303,000
Carter	6.693	1,827,000
Kennedy	5.766	(312,000)
Anderson	0.646	13,000
Baker	4.809	(406,000)
Bush	6.383	179,000
Connally	9.556	(48,000)
Crane	2.993	(357,000)
Dole	1.134	(49,000)
Reagan	11.571	209,000

Money is more important than talent in an American Presidential election and some campaigns are now running out of the former. Airfares, car hire, newspaper and television time are all much more expensive than in 1976. One minute on the national television network now costs about $100,000; a five minute 'documentary' cost one candidate – Baker – $76,000 and Reagan spent $400,000 on announcing his candidacy on 90 stations simultaneously. To save money Reagan's staff are now working on pay cuts; as are Kennedy's. Candidates can collect Federal Matching Funds for every contribution up to $250 on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Carter has collected $1.8 million so far; Reagan $1.7m. Connally took no funds, to avoid the limits on spending.

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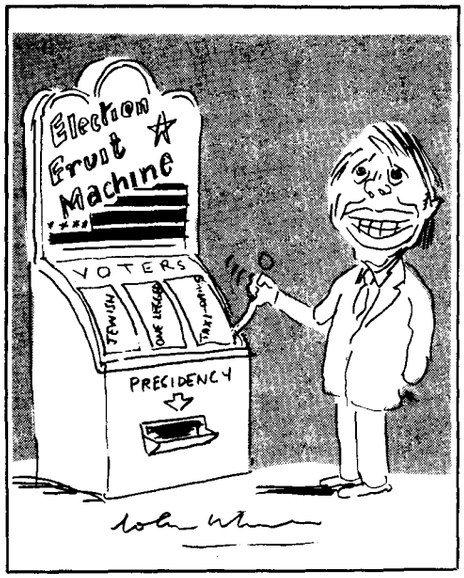

the reporters as they move from stop to stop on the campaign trail – if the publisher doesn't telephone in the judgment himself. Once they have spoken, the local press and television newsmen pick up the cues and follow the 'front-runners'. If, as in Connally's and then Reagan's cases, both the national and local contingents in the caravan tire of making the same story each day, then an 'underdog' stands a chance of attracting 'visibility'.

The Republican John Anderson was able to pick up the endorsements of several small city papers in New Hampshire, and these were instrumental in his first strong showing in the primary in that state. That in turn gave him a sudden surge in national publicity in the Massachusetts contest immediately afterwards, and the win there – for electoral reasons which distinguish and isolate Massachusetts' Republicans from the party's supporters in the rest of the country – promoted his chances in Illinois this week.

Strictly speaking, there shouldn't be much room for debate among the candidates in this type of electioneering, and indeed, there wouldn't be if front-runners and well-endowed candidates had their way. Support for the debates in Iowa and New Hampshire came from the invisible challengers, the poor and down-at-heel men who needed the exposure and free publicity. In such debates, only a fool could lose – and George Bush proved himself exactly. Not until after the votes have been cast, however, is it worthwhile to guess which policies might have swayed the result, and whether the Middle might have shifted to the Left (Anderson) or Right (Reagan). As the candidates, without exception, chase the Middle to get elected, the process has only a mechanical outcome, and neither a logical nor an ideological one. The Middle is always approximately where the winner of the most recent contest happened to be. It is possible that a candidate can run without intending to be elected and this brief irrationality can galvanise some enthusiasm from the voters. Only the Republican Party has shown over the years any inclination to nominate such candidates – Goldwater was the last of them.

AS THIS TYPE of election campaign drags on, something very traditional can happen, and Carter and his experts must be given credit for anticipating and then betting on it. You see, in a race of several candidates, all pursuing the mythical Middle, the decline of the political parties won't be as significant as it has seemed. With nothing to choose between the Democratic and the Republican nominees, the party label can make all the difference.

So long as the Democratic president can win the nomination in this case, then he can almost count on defeating *anyone* the Republicans nominate because traditionally Democrats outnumber Republicans two to one. To reduce the final contest to this old-fashioned form, therefore, Carter must make sure that as frail as it may be these days, the skeleton of the Democratic Party isn't split over the nomination. And he needs to ensure that there are no policy positions, symbols or levels which are left over for a Republican to attract a mass Democratic defection. An incumbent is nicely positioned to do both, and by accomplishing them already, Carter's eventual victory now seems assured.

Kennedy will stay in the race in the hope that the President will make a fatal spill. But the Senator has lost so far despite a number of Presidential pitfalls and failures which he has not been able to capitalise on. In this respect, the Chappaquiddick problem is not as significant as might be supposed. A poll by the *Los Angeles Times* last December showed that the issue was not considered important by more than 60 per cent of registered Democrats. Among these, Carter's lead over Kennedy remained substantial, and if anything it has grown with time.

In part, Kennedy has failed for lack of the very traditional organisation which his family lineage was thought to guarantee him. While each of the Republican candidates and the President have spent more than twelve months and close to three years collecting money and building an organisation for their campaigns in each state, Kennedy did virtually nothing but read the encomiums with which the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* have been enticing him into the race. He thus entered last November with relatively poor organisation and a shortage of money.

But as Connally, Baker, Bush, Dole, Crane and even Ford can testify, money alone cannot supplant the shortage of people to carry the campaign on the ground and over the airwaves. This is not, by the way, the triumph of democracy over money which some writers have celebrated in Connally's demise: his supporters are giving to Reagan, to Bush and to Carter with equal zeal and more certain probability of success.

But Carter's ability to command the urban centres has been quite remarkable – he has gathered the endorsements of informal support of approximately 96 per cent of the city mayors around the country, Democrats and Republicans alike. In Chicago, where the mayor, Jane Byrne, was an early Kennedy endorser, Carter has been able to steal most of the Cook County Party men, as well as the leaderships in the surrounding suburban areas. While these officials cannot muster the legions of voters to the polls, as they once claimed to do, their support for the President is at the very least testimony to Carter's success in appropriating as much of the middle of domestic policy as he needs to win among the Democrats.

As this has become more obvious, Kennedy's shortage of money has increased his handicap. At the moment, his financial position is so parlous that he is trying to buy television time for the New York primary on the collateral of still unfinished paintings by well-known supporters. Never has the value of a work by Andrew Warhol been better approximated than as the collateral for a bank transaction to purchase advertising for a failing political candidate.

Christopher Hird

Restructuring capitalism

ARE THE BANKS and oil companies making massive profits or are these, as the companies claim, distorted by inflation? The answer to both these questions is yes. As British manufacturing industry faces a sharp decline in profits, banks and oil companies are in a remarkably strong financial position, partly *because of* the effect of high interest rates and rising oil prices. Even after eliminating the effects of inflation they are significantly more profitable than most of the rest of British industry.

The profits of Britain's biggest oil company, BP (biggest shareholder, H.M. Government), rose by over 250 per cent last year to £1,621 million *after tax* – representing a massive 30 per cent return on capital. Those of the Royal Dutch/Shell group – in which the UK Shell Transport and Trading has a 40 per cent interest – rose by 180 per cent to £2,051 million. As the companies were quick to point out, these profits were significantly boosted by 'stock profits': the companies were holding stocks of oil when OPEC put up the price, so they made a sudden profit, but all of this will be needed to finance the replacement stocks.

This is not as uncontroversial a point as it may sound: it is a legitimate matter of debate whether companies should expect to finance all increases in stock levels from profits, or whether they should be borrowing some of the money. And, as it happens, the oil companies had little difficulty in financing their business last year. Royal Dutch/Shell, for example, had over £3,300 million available to finance capital investment and working capital, which together amounted to some £3,800 million. The group spent a further £1,680 million on acquisitions but even so managed to keep its borrowing to only a quarter of total assets. This – together with the fact that, even after eliminating stocks, both oil companies' net incomes doubled last year – suggests that they were able to pass on cost increases to customers with ease. And, amid pleas that profits are needed to finance the business it is worth noting that both companies considered they could afford at least to double their dividend payments.

This applies even more to the banks, who automatically increase profits when interest rates rise, as they pay no interest on the cash in current accounts but charge interest on all loans.

The major argument in defence of bank profits is that they need them to build up reserves to protect the banks against bad debts and a possible withdrawal of deposits. However, considering their cautious lending policies bad debts are now minute: £3.6 million, over the last two years at Lloyds, compared with advances of more than £12,000 million. And, realistically, not even the Thatcher government would allow a bank to collapse. Even adjusting the banks' profit figures for inflation, they are, according to stockbrokers Phillips and Drew, making a return on capital of around 17 per cent – this is propably three times as high as in manufacturing industry.

The profits of the oil companies, the banks and operations of British companies overseas actually disguise the problems of UK industrial profits within in a total profit increase last year of between 25 and 30 per cent. A remarkable restructuring of British capitalism is under way. The combined retained profits of the two oil companies and the four major banks come to something like £4,400 million: roughly a third of *total* profits of industrial and commercial companies.

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JURIES
Peter Chippindale

What lies behind jury vetting and the attack on juries?

Trial by professional adjudication

We are used to it and know that it works; if we were not, we should say it embodies a ridiculous and impracticable idea – Lord Devlin, Hamlyn Lectures on Trial by Jury, 1956.

AS LORD DEVLIN pointed out, the British system of trial by jury makes no logical sense at all. You take 12 ordinary people at random; you give them no training, put them into an alien environment and surround them by rules specifically designed to keep parts of the truth from them; you then expect them, often after hearing a long, complex and confusing series of statements to come up with the right answer time after time. But now there has been a change of tone. Because it is illogical, the authorities say juries must be improved. The Association of Chief Police Officers, which represents the chief constables of all the police forces in England and Wales, wants jury vetting in all cases, whether they are serious or not. ACPO, in its evidence to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure, has said: 'Juries should be comprised of people who are not shown to have been irresponsible or criminally dishonest.'

Barry Pain, the Chief Constable of Kent, and the secretary of ACPO's CID committee, explained recently on London Weekend Television's *London Programme* that the reason was simple. There was a 'gut feeling' in the police force that trials were no longer as 'fair and objective' as they used to be, and that professional criminals were walking out of cases when the police knew they were guilty. It was not a feeling, he admitted, that could be based on any statistics.

This attack on the jury system by the police, who are riding on the back of the Attorney-General's sanction of vetting in 'serious cases' (Official Secrets Act, terrorism, and gang crime) is not new. It was a similar campaign, led by Sir Robert Mark when he was Chief Constable of Leicester, which led to the introduction of majority verdicts in 1967. The grounds put forward (which are also one of those the police are now using for vetting in all cases) was the likelihood of bribery and intimidation of jurors in serious cases. The illogicality of the argument, which was really one about jury protection in certain instances, rather than a sweeping reform applicable to all trials, went largely unnoticed.

But what is new is the motivation for the attacks. Extraordinarily it was not until six years ago, in 1974, that the property qualification for jury service was abolished. Until then anybody who was to be eligible for jury service had to be either a property owner or the householder of a dwelling with a rateable value of more than £30. The amount had been fixed as long ago as 1825 and it was only because it was not index-linked that it had survived so long. Successive rating revaluations gradually let more and more people on to juries, so by 1974 there were 8 million people eligible in England and Wales. But although the revaluations let more people on, they tended to be all the same kinds of people – as Lord Devlin described them, 'predominantly male, middle-aged, middle-minded and middle-class.' The concept of trial by your equals only applied if you were middle-class as well.

The Juries Act of 1974 ended all that, increasing the number of potential jurors from 8 to 30 million, but, more importantly, radically altering the type of juror. Women, who until 1974, had virtually all been excluded, now at least in theory make up half the panels. There has also been a vast increase in the number of young and working-class people serving on juries. Quite a few people, working-class or not, who are now on juries have criminal convictions or (another factor which the police believe is important) have been on the receiving end as victims of crime.

The police's arguments for jury-vetting have been based on the assertion that juries can now contain people with such extreme views, or such a criminal background, that they are unable to judge a case impartially – with the unstressed, but basic assumption that their inability to be objective will swing them towards an acquittal, rather than a conviction, whatever the weight of evidence.

The police do not like the new juries and would much prefer to have the old ones. Both Pain and Judge Alan King-Hamilton, the judge in the Anarchist trial who flayed the vetted jury for their not guilty verdicts, have strongly objected to young people on juries, complaining they were often anti-establishment, unstable, and without the 'maturity and knowledge of the world' that comes from getting married, buying a house and having a family.

THE POLICE DEMAND on juries is not an idle one, and there was a graphic demonstration recently of how far they are now going to ensure that juries are 'objective and impartial'. Last year there were three separate trials of a gang of serious armed robbers charged with three major robberies, including a brilliantly executed robbery from a security van in the Blackwall Tunnel. Because the men came from the East End the police first moved the trial from the Old Bailey to Maidstone to ensure that no East Enders would be on the jury. They then applied to the Director of Public Prosecutions to vet the citizens of Maidstone who would be serving on the jury. The application was refused (the only known instance where one has been turned down), but at the end of the first trial, after the jury had been reduced to 10 men, the police said there had been attempts to intimidate jurors and successfully applied to vet the juries in the two subsequent trials. In addition to this (apart from having the safeguards of the majority verdict) they also used the now-established practice of getting one of the robbers to go 'supergrass' and give damning Queen's evidence. All the trials ended in convictions.

That the police went to such extreme lengths shows how serious they now think the problem is. The statistical evidence, however, shows that the police's 'gut feeling', translated into hard facts, is a rise in the acquittal rate in London of those pleading not guilty from 42 per cent before 1974 to 45 per cent last year. What is seldom pointed out is that nearly half of those acquittals are not by the jury at all, but either by the prosecution abandoning its case or the judge stopping the trial before it has finished and directing the jury to find a not guilty verdict. The position has been further complicated recently. Highly publicised cases of police corruption have shown the police up in a new light; juries, as the Criminal Bar Association has said in evidence to the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure, no longer automatically believe the unsupported word of a police officer; the waiting time for trial has gone up, some juries often acquit out of sheer sympathy a person who has been waiting anything up to two years for trial on a minor matter; many barristers say that the police often go for a more serious charge than the evidence supports; legal aid is now firmly established (with the result that innocent people who were before wrongfully convicted are now quite rightly being acquitted); and the increasing pressure of work on the police from rising crime, coupled with the nosedive in standards of advocacy by barristers, means that prosecutions are increasingly badly prepared and simply not up to the job. The exact influence of all these factors cannot be measured but nobody doubts that they are influential.

WHAT RESEARCH there has been also shows that the new sorts of people on juries cannot be blamed for acquitting more people. There has only been one major study of jury verdicts. This study, carried out by Dr John Baldwin and Dr Michael McConville from the Bar Faculty of Birminghan University and funded by the Home Office, looked at 5,000 cases in London and Birmingham. The conclusion was simple. None of the factors – age, sex, background or class – could explain jury verdicts. The rate of acquittal was constant, whether the juries were primarily young or old, male or female, working-class or middle-class.

Some heads in the legal profession, where the whole debate is causing great unease, are now becoming increasingly alarmed at the drift it is taking. By logic the sanctioning of jury-vetting in serious cases should allow it in all. Every case is serious to those involved in it.

But beyond this, there are even deeper worries; first that the whole system of justice rests on people having confidence in it. Tampering with the system will destroy that confidence, so that people will no longer believe in the verdicts that are reached and come to the conclusion, rightly or wrongly, that the result has been rigged. Second, there is a deep fear that because of its very illogicality the jury system does not stand up to rational examination. Once it starts being subjected to analysis its faults will be laid bare and it will be impossible, rationally, to counter the demands for its abolition.

These demands have not yet come fully to the surface, but they are starting. Barry Pain, on television, stressed that 'objective and impartial juries were necessary . . . Otherwise you've got to leave it to professional adjudicators . . .' He said: 'I see it as the only alternative. In other words, you do away with juries and only have professional judges and magistrates.'

Peter Chippindale is a reporter on London Weekend Television's London Programme.

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ZIMBABWE
David Caute

Mugabe faces a series of dilemmas on the pace of reform

A 'going concern'

AT LONG LAST peace settles across Zimbabwe. Though 90 years of colonial rule cannot be disinherited overnight, the people are smiling; you may now drive from Chipinga to Karoi in perfect tranquillity. The kopjies and multi-tiered blue mountains of the eastern highlands propose, in their expansive beauty, the African destiny of an African people.

The bars are full of troopies of the Rhodesian Light Infantry blinded by beer and betrayal. Officials of the old regime await their fate in stunned helplessness, well aware how they crippled the lives of the men and women now elected to lead Zimbabwe in the twin tasks of de-colonisation and reconstruction: the Prime Minister himself and Joshua Nkomo were each incarcerated for more than ten years; so too were Edgar Tekere, general secretary of Zanu PF, now Minister of Manpower Planning, and Clement Muchachi, now Minister of Public Works. Eddison Zvobgo, Minister of Local Government, was inside for seven years, Joseph Msika, Minister of Natural Resources, for thirteen years, and Maurice Nyagumbo, Minister of Mines, for 20 years.

I found Nyagumbo in the Manica Road headquarters of Zanu PF, where stairways, corridors and offices teem with ministers-designate, bodyguards, press officers who don't trust the press, relatives and just about anybody who enjoys standing about on the apron stage of power. First arrested in 1959, during the 'liberal' era of Edgar Whitehead, Nyagumbo was not finally released from Salisbury prison until 12 December 1979, when he was flown to London to witness the signing of the Lancaster House agreement. With remarkable philosophical calmness he recalls how a confrontation with a vindictive prison governor brought his studies to a halt for eight years. Now, lacking any background knowledge of the industry, he must take on the Chamber of Mines, powerful multinationals like Anglo-American, and a civil service reared on the principle that what's good for business is good for Rhodesia.

Mugabe's declared policy is to leave the mines, industry, commerce and agriculture in private hands. Although still suspicious, businessmen privately explain that Zanu PF has taken note of the economic chaos prevailing in Mozambique and the black states to the north: 'Which is one good reason,' a stockbroker added, 'why we were right not to hand over power in the early Sixties.' The great worry is a 'crisis of expectations' – that the black peasants and workers who brought Mugabe to power may expect him to fulfill his election promises. Retaining 'white confidence' and the more than 10:1 ratio prevailing between white and black wages is, on the other hand, considered essential 'for the future of this wonderful country'.

THE WHITES will remain nervous. Enos Nkala, the new Minister of Finance, recently declared in Addis Ababa that there would be discrimination in favour of the poor against the rich. 'We want the rich to pay for all the social services.' The prospect of a uniform minimum wage is greatly feared. Kumbirai Kangai, the incoming Minister of Labour and a leading radical within Zanu PF's influential central committee, insists that he will establish a national minimum wage applicable to all workers, regardless of sector. If he does, white cars, caravans and removal trucks may be queuing up at the Beit Bridge border post two miles deep. While the prevailing minimum for workers in manufacturing industry is over $60 a month, most agricultural labourers employed by white farmers receive no more than $20; the average wage for domestic servants – those indispensable houseboys, gardenboys and cookboys – is about $35. 'If they want to cut their own throats,' comment white housewives who now imagine themselves to be subject to cheeky treatment in the supermarkets, 'let them: we're not staying.'

Popperfoto

What will most certainly afford the whites a breathing space is the new government's gigantic burden of restoring a war-ravaged society threatened by malnutrition and disease. Kumbirai Kangai's first task must be to resettle thousands of war refugees, both those who fled to neighbouring states and those who have crowded into the squalid squatter camps which litter Salisbury and Bulawayo. Umtali's Sakubva township, nominally restricted to 24,000 Africans, actually houses 60,000; in addition, some 300,000 peasants are waiting to leave the hated protected villages.

Leaving aside the humiliation of repaying to South Africa the loans which financed Ian Smith's deficit-budget war machine, Mugabe will have to find $100 million to bring life in the tribal trust lands back to a minimal economic viability. More than 1,000 out of 1,500 dip tanks, as well as the majority of boreholes, have been destroyed. Due to the consequent ravages of the tsetse fly, the African national herd has been reduced by a million head of cattle. By the end of January, 1,500 primary schools and 89 African secondary schools had been closed; to top it, the second drought in successive years has brought maize supplies perilously low. It's hardly astonishing that Mugabe is in no mood to go to war with South Africa or to be heard singing the *Internationale*.

TO REASSURE the vital capitalist sector, despite bitter opposition within the central committee, Mugabe vested Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in the hands of David Smith, a leading Rhodesian Front technocrat, and Denis Norman, president of the (white) Commercial Farmers' Union. I asked Mr Norman whether he had extracted firm guarantees before accepting the post. 'I thought about it,' he said, 'but decided it wouldn't be wise – it might have offended their political philosophy. The main thing was to take the job.' Lord Soames expresses pleasure at these two appointments, 'this outward and visible sign,' as he puts it, of respect respect for free enterprise. 'Mugabe realises he has inherited a going concern.' But Zanu PF militants are less enthusiastic: 'It simply means we now have a hot line from the heart of the Cabinet to Pretoria.'

Land reform, the creation of the cooperatives and collectives of which Mugabe frequently speaks, will be entrusted to Sydney Sekeramayi, a bright young doctor of medicine who trained at the Royal College of Surgeons. Experimental and socialist rehabilitation schemes will be confined to the 4.5 million hectares of commercial farming land currently on the market, most of it in the lowvelde, where the Sabi offers irrigation, and in the densely populated Mrewa-Mtoko-Mayo area. The short-term arguments against indiscriminate expropriation of viable European farms are strong ones: 75 per cent of agricultural produce, and 96 per cent of food sales, are generated by 3,500 out of 5,500 white farms. Not only do these farms employ 38 per cent of the total black labour force, but in most arable areas the density of population per hectare is higher on commercial farms than in the reserves. No wonder Denis Norman's desk is piled high with congratulatory telegrams, though one or two phrased in faintly ironic terms.

HOW RAPIDLY will white power disintegrate? Already houses are up for sale, removal vans are fully booked for weeks ahead and a flood of resignations is expected to take effect when military and police contracts expire at the end of April. On the other hand there are signs that the hard core of the white military and civil infrastructure may yet stage a protracted rearguard campaign of attrition. At 12 noon on Monday, 10 March, Colonel Soby and Major Morgan of 3 Brigade, Umtali, summoned some 40 members of the city's establishment to the Cecil Hotel to consider post-election tactics. Not a single black was invited. In mid-December the same closed meeting of civic officials, headteachers, employers and farmers had been warned that, although a Marxist victory was not on the cards, no stone should be left unturned to ensure success for Bishop Muzorewa. Again sworn to secrecy, the meeting of 10 March was assured that no permanent stand-down of regular and reserve security forces was contemplated; although stripped of national power, the white elite continues to assume that the interests of the minority remain paramount.

Even so, those Special Branch officers and Selous Scouts who pursued counter-insurgency with unbridled zeal now have good cause to 'gap it'. Joshua Nkomo's erstwhile jailer took the first plane out. Home telephones are beginning to hum with threatening calls. In the southern mining town of Shabani, where Garfield Todd was arrested early in February, SB officers who engaged in a systematic repression of Zanu PF during the

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election campaign have been burning their files.

Shabani Special Branch is housed behind an ugly fence, covered with tattered hessian, in the middle of the BSAP compound. Among those arrested and incarcerated on charges of collaborating with terrorists were Richard Hove, now Minister of the Public Service, and Mrs Eddison Zvogbo, wife of the new Minister of Local Government. When some 180 Zanla guerrillas attempted to deliver themselves to an assembly point via the Ceasefire Monitoring Force, SB Shabani intervened, handed out beatings during interrogation, imprisoned the majority of the guerrillas and tried, by a blend of bribery and threats to persuade their leader, Donny Haanei, to work for the Bishop. Meanwhile a BSAP Inspector, who arrived from Britain to serve the illegal regime only five years ago, arrested and threatened a number of blacks in an attempt to make the case against Todd stick. One was told: 'I want you to give evidence against Todd. If you do, I promise I'll do everything in my power to lighten your sentence. Remember – if Muzorewa wins you could face the death sentence.' The Inspector's confidence in the Bishop's destiny was further conveyed by a portrait of the beaming prelate above his desk.

Another potential witness against Todd was beaten about the head, face and shoulders with a stick, then instructed to turn his back for a whipping with a sjambok of hippo hide. Having seen the welts and scars on the bodies of other prisoners crowded together on the cold floor, night after night, of a stinking police cell, the witness decided to 'confess'. Later he signed an affidavit retracting his confession but he remained in such a state of fear that he implored me not to mention his name. When I visited the SB branch offices to confront specific officers with well documented charges of brutality, I was told that they were all 'unavailable, indefinitely.'

Mick Hamer

The £2,000 million perk

LAST YEAR some £2,000 million was given to motorists by the Treasury – equivalent to roughly five pence on income tax and almost twice as large as the subsidy to mortgage holders. Despite the size of this hand-out – most of which ends up in the pockets of the rich – it is highly unlikely that Sir Geoffrey Howe will attempt to tighten up company car taxation in next week's Budget.

According to the Inland Revenue, out of the 14 million cars on Britain's roads there are between 1.6 million and 2 million company cars – that is cars provided for the use of an employee. The system of taxing these cars is extremely lenient – and has become more so since the 1976 Finance Act. Firstly, if you have a company car and are poor – in the Treasury's terms that means earning less than £8,500 a year – then your car is completely untaxed. For those earning over this income threshold their cars are taxed in line with the Revenue's 'scale'. The 'scale' assessment of a car's value considerably under-estimates the true value of a car, with the scale value being roughly one third of the Automobile Association's comparable estimates (although the AA estimates are over-stated). In 1976 the scale originally was set at more realistic values, but these were reduced after pressure from employers. In addition employers frequently pay for all – or part of – the petrol that their employees use for their private motoring. This benefit is untaxed. As a result company cars have become an increasingly popular way of evading pay restraint in recent years. The Revenue believes that company cars now account for 80 per cent of all fringe benefits.

There is no accurate accepted estimate of the cost of this subsidy to the taxpayer. But British Rail, in their response to the Inland Revenue's consultative paper, reckon that tax relief on company cars could be costing the Exchequer around £1,370 million in lost corporation tax. About one-third of this relief relates to capital expenditure – the leasing or purchase of vehicles – and the remaining two-thirds is relief on running expenses.

But this is not the only way in which the state subsidises the motorist. The self-employed also enjoy a similar hand-out to the tune of £170 million. Furthermore many companies provide their employees with car allowances for using their own cars on the company's business. The majority of firms pay a mileage allowance and the rate at which this is fixed is usually related to the Automobile Association's estimates of motoring costs. These estimates are produced every year just after the budget to the accompaniment of '*New Price Shock for Motorists*' headlines. However the real importance of the AA's figures – aside from their rather doubtful news value – is that they are the benchmark which most companies, and local authorities, use to fix their motoring allowances. Stephen Potter, at the Open University, has shown that the AA figures are in fact substantially higher than the average motorist's expenditure. The net result is that roughly a third of the mileage allowance paid by firms ends up in the employee's pocket as untaxed income. This not only represents a direct loss to the Exchequer – because it is a legal tax avoidance scheme – but it is also a loss where mileage allowances are paid by government departments and local authorities. A company making such payments will, of course, get tax relief at the present rate of corporation tax of 52 per cent. British Rail estimate that tax relief on mileage allowances could amount to £820 million.

Thus the total cost to the state of business motoring is in the region of £2,360 million – a figure which excludes any loss to the public purse through overpayment of mileage allowances by government departments or local authorities.

Clearly some of this tax relief relates to justifiable business expenditure in much the same way that tax relief can be claimed on train or plane fares. But it is equally clear that a major part is simply a subsidy to private motoring. The extent of this subsidy can only be guessed at, but it seems probable – judging from data in the Department of Transport's *National Travel Survey* that at least half, and maybe more, of the total tax relief given to motoring has nothing to do with business.

The consequences of this subsidy are considerable, particularly on frequency of use of cars. In 1974 the Greater London Council estimated that over half of all the cars used for travelling to work in Central London were subsidised. Strictly speaking the journey to and from work should not be eligible for tax relief. A 1978 report showed that nearly 70 per cent of journeys to work in Central London were financially assisted and that four out of ten cars parked on meters or yellow lines were company cars. According to the Inland Revenue around 70 per cent of new cars are bought by businesses. Companies tend to buy new and sell after two or three years. This policy has the double effect of depressing secondhand car prices and inflating the number of cars on the road. In the last few years the number of new cars that have been bought privately – based on the Revenue's estimates – has been running at around half of the number of cars being scrapped.

Subsidising car ownership in this way is not a progressive social policy. The distribution of car ownership is heavily biased towards high income earners. In 1975 only one out of ten households earning under £1,000 per annum (roughly twice that at today's prices) owned a car, whereas at the other end of the scale, nine out of ten households with incomes exceeding £9,000 per annum (about £18,000 today) owned cars.

Not only do the rich benefit disproportionately from subsidised car use but four secondary effects tend to reinforce this bias. First, car subsidies reduce the demand for public transport. The impact of increased car use on public transport has some fairly familar consequences. As passengers desert public transport so fares rise, and services are cut and so still more passengers stop travelling.

In 1978 the state paid £1,100 million towards the cost of running the country's buses and trains – rather less than half the tax relief that was given in the same year to car users. Thus the effect of the car subsidy is to undermine the support given to public transport. And, incidentally, its support to the British car industry is limited: just over half company cars are imported, compared with one-fifth in 1975.

Secondly, subsidies exacerbate traffic congestion. Many local authorities consider congestion to be an intractable problem. But this is largely because traffic restraint measures will have no effect on drivers who can simply pass any extra cost on to companies which in turn can offset their cost against their tax liability.

The third and most obvious effect of the car subsidy is to increase the demand and pressure for road building, another drain on the Exchequer.

But car subsidies also increase energy consumption. As the Revenue points out in its consultative paper: 'it is important that the tax system should not be used as a means of insulating certain categories of taxpayer' from rising oil prices. Car subsidies are subverting the government's energy conservation strategy. Of the six major categories of oil use (power stations, domestic consumers, road transport, iron and steel, industrial users and other consumers) road transport is the only sector to have increased its fuel use since the 1973 oil crisis.

Roger Woddis

Games

It was Humbug Day in the Commons,
The aggressor stood accused,
And most were plainly angry,
And some were just confused.
The members thronged the Chamber
To justify their pay;
To show their zeal for the commonweal,
Two hundred stayed away.

A hush fell over the benches,
As Sir Ian Gilmour rose:
'You cannot call us bullies' –
And his finger stroked his nose.
There was passionate talk of freedom,
With powerful points from the floor,
And the Left jeered Winston Churchill,
And the Right cheered Peter Shore.

While most approved the boycott,
And some of them abstained,
There were none who felt defeated,
And all felt they had gained.
For this is the final verdict,
However the game is played:
The way it's told, to lose a gold
Counts less than losing trade.

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

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INTERVIEW

Kissinger and the historical record

ANTHONY BARNETT talks to Vietnam's LE DUC THO.

Camera Press

Is Henry Kissinger's book *The White House Years* a reliable record of US activity during the Nixon administration? One person in a position to answer this question is Le Duc Tho (right), the Hanoi Politbureau member who sat opposite Kissinger for many hours in the negotiating sessions which led to the Paris Peace Accords. A substantial part of Kissinger's book is concerned with these talks. Le Duc Tho challenges Kissinger's veracity, and is scornful of his world view. He sees him as a man outdated by at least a century.

I sought out Le Duc Tho's views on a recent trip to the Vietnamese capital. I put down questions in writing, and asked for a written response in English. This seemed both the most exact procedure, given the length of Kissinger's book, and the one most likely to succeed.

The administration in Hanoi is extremely baffling. It combines extremes of competence and inefficiency, people are both unnecessarily secretive and unexpectedly frank. Relations with Westerners are contradictory, in a way which perhaps reflects recent history. The anti-war movement assisted the Vietnamese and they are grateful, yet at the same time their country has been singled out for military and political victimisation. Thus Le Duc Tho's appeal for international assistance in understanding Pol Pot, which I mention below, should be read in combination with the fact that William Shawcross has just been refused a visa. This despite the fact that he was among the first to recognise that Cambodia's contemporary history is one of the utmost moral importance for our time. Such action by Hanoi is made all the more paradoxical by the fact that figures such as Arnaud de Borchgrave of *Newsweek* have been allowed in recently.

Le Duc Tho's response to my questions was only delivered on the penultimate day of my stay. I was therefore unable to put supplementary questions to him. Nonetheless, I had taken the opportunity to register certain differences between interviewer and interviewee. When it seemed possible that my suggestion would be accepted I put down three types of questions: those concerned with Kissinger's book, some about the actual negotiations so far as Cambodia was concerned, and others on more general matters. These latter ranged from relations to China and the USSR, to Vietnam's historic expansion southwards and its attempt to conquer Cambodia in the 1830s (which was a costly failure). I made it clear that my analysis of China differed from Hanoi's official view, and I suggested that it was time to abandon Ho Chi Minh's tradition of not speaking openly about differences with fraternal countries, an aspect of political democracy particularly important for Cambodia. Le Duc Tho decided that he could answer for the record only the first two sets of questions. In a private talk he alluded to some of the others, and I also discussed these with Vietnam's new Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach.

The obvious come-back question which follows from Le Duc Tho's replies concerns Cambodia. He emphasises that Hanoi assisted the Khmer revolutionaries, yet denounces their leader as 'more Maoist than Mao'. Why then did Vietnam back Pol Pot through 1976? It seems that Hanoi viewed his animosity towards the Vietnamese as an understandable expression of nationalism, which would at least guarantee Cambodia's independence from Peking.

If this was so, it was a fatal miscalculation. Today, the Vietnamese do not fully believe what happened in Cambodia, despite their propaganda about the 'genocidal Pol Pot Ieng Sary clique'. Le Duc Tho could laugh at Kissinger. He was composed when he discussed policy in Cambodia today; Vietnamese forces would not get bogged down, and would in time withdraw, he insisted.

But when he spoke of Pol Pot a genuine pre-occupation seemed to emerge. The Cambodian people do not understand how it could have happened, nor do the Vietnamese, he stated, and he went on to urge foreign scholars to help explain how Pol Pot's regime could have come about. A note of inquiry about the modern world was struck that cannot be found at all in Kissinger's memoirs. Perhaps it was due to this capacity that, in the end, Le Duc Tho got the better of the American.

Question: In an interview you gave to Cora Weiss at the end of 1973, you said: 'During our talks I told Kissinger that I will not write a book. He said he would. I said, "Do not distort the truth" '.

Are there any distortions or omissions in his account of the negotiations?

Answer: The NEW STATESMAN review called the memoirs of Kissinger 'a web of untruths'. In my opinion, this is a quite precise assessment.

As everybody knows, the United States could have come out of Vietnam in 1969. But the Nixon-Kissinger administration nurtured an illusion of using 'Vietnamisation' of the war together with the 'China card' to pull out of South Vietnam militarily – while still maintaining its presence politically through the puppet administration in Saigon. Its aim was to perpetuate the partition of Vietnam.

But the United States had to pull out militarily, which led to the collapse of the Thieu administration and the complete liberation of South Vietnam. That was the biggest ever setback for the United States. Mr Kissinger cannot tell the truth about this.

Instead, Mr Kissinger has tried to 'rewrite history' in an attempt to claim as his own success the policy which led to the setback. He attempts to justify the crimes that the Nixon-Kissinger administration further perpetrated against the Indochinese peoples and the additional losses in lives, money, material and national dignity to the United States which they caused. That is the main distortion in the chapters dealing with the war in Vietnam and Indochina.

The book says that the United States had to carry out B52 bombing at the end of 1972, because Vietnam wanted to prolong the negotiations and refused to sign the agreement the fundamental content of which had been agreed upon by both sides in October.

As a matter of fact, it was the United States that did a complete about-face. As both sides had agreed, Kissinger should have come to Hanoi on 23 October 1972 to initial the Agreement, which could have been officially signed on 31 October 1972. On 21 October 1972, Nixon sent a message to Prime Minister Pham Van Dong saying that the United States 'considers the Agreement complete'.

But on the *following* day, 22 October, Kissinger said it was still necessary to hold another session and, therefore, the Agreement could not be signed on 31 October. That was why the negotiation was prolonged, solely because of the United States.

The US manoeuvre in that terror bombing was that the Nixon-Kissinger administration hoped it could seriously weaken the potentialities of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, thereby forcing us to accept additional terms posed by the United States. On the contrary, the US lost 32 B52s, together with many pilots captured or killed. At the same time there was angry condemnation of the Nixon and Kissinger administration by world opinion, including opinion in the US itself. The victory of this 'Dien Bien Phu in the air' compelled the United States to sign an Agreement the content of which was not in the main different from that in October.

THE BOOK CLAIMS that I had 'secretly' told Kissinger that 'the mission of the Vietnamese people was not only to take over South Vietnam but to dominate the whole of Indochina as well'. This is a brazen fabrication.

In fact, when Mr Kissinger asked me to discuss the 'neutralisation' of Kampuchea (Cambodia), I told him that he and I had only the right to discuss the Vietnam problem.

To understand why he has made up such 'secret' remarks, you must remember that the book also serves Kissinger's desire to return to office – despite his record of war crimes. So he had joined in a new anti-Vietnam campaign, in which Washington and Peking are now engaged.

The book also states that I had suggested to Mr Kissinger that Thieu should be eliminated. This too is a fabrication. We did not fight against one person, but against the entire reactionary regime. The elimination of the

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Camera Press

Le Duc Tho at the Paris Peace Negotiations, flanked by Vietnam's new Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thach (right) and Xuan Thuy (left).

individual chieftain is the traditional job of the United States.

It was the United States that had previously eliminated Diem, and Mr Kissinger himself suggested more than once that Thieu should be replaced by big Minh*.

I told him once that 'you are a liar'. Even his close associates, Helmut Sonnefeldt, for example, also confirmed that he 'tells lies because that is his nature'.

Question: What is your estimate of Kissinger's real role in US policy making? In the aftermath of Nixon's downfall some people are presenting Kissinger as the main architect of American foreign policy, especially with regard to China. Kissinger himself, however, in the midst of one policy crisis, over India, said: 'We are the President's men'. Although a skilful servant of power, was Kissinger ever in fact its master?

Answer: When successful, Mr Kissinger wants to claim his own contribution. When failing to achieve success, he shifts the responsibility on to Nixon.

Notwithstanding, Nixon and Kissinger complement each other to such an extent that public opinion calls them 'Nissinger'. And both of them must be held responsible for the US foreign policy in the years 1968-74.

Kissinger typified post Second World War US diplomacy – its aggressive nature and arrogance. That is why, although politically he sometimes praised highly the policy of negotiation and compromise, basically, he attempted to use military strength. Threats, treachery and deception were his stock in trade.

Yet he is living in the 20th century. The balance of forces favours socialism, national independence, peace and democracy. Kissinger is under the illusion that he can repeat the 19th century policy of Metternich, and in his vanity he thinks this shows his mastery of realpolitik.

Actually, he and Nixon were naive and their compatriots who opposed the war were more realistic. Today his effort to justify the past could lead to further setbacks. The same applies to China, as it has already discovered through its support of Pol Pot aggression against Vietnam.

**A tall general who became president in the last hours of the Saigon regime. (Ed.)*

Question: Kissinger presents the Paris Peace Accords as a complete triumph for Nixon's and his diplomacy. He presents an interpretation of the Accords in which they are seen as allowing the US to provide unlimited military supplies to the Thieu regime, as prohibiting the replacement of North Vietnamese forces south of the old DMZ, and as preserving the Saigon Government. He states that Nixon would have used 'the means necessary to enforce a peace'. Recently, an American liberal columnist, Anthony Lewis, described the Christmas bombing as establishing a level of violence that America would be prepared to repeat, to maintain peace (*New York Times,* 2/12/79). Do you think this is accurate? If so, to what extent did you realise at the time that Nixon considered the withdrawal of US troops as a means of perpetuating the bombing?

Answer: The objectives of the Nixon-Kissinger administration in the Paris Agreement were to withdraw the US troops but at the same time to maintain the puppet administration to implement its neo-colonialism in South Vietnam.

The United States, in fact, was compelled:

- To recognise all the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people written down in Chapter I, Article I of the Agreement.
- To accept the presence of Vietnamese armed forces in South Vietnam while the United States had to withdraw all its troops from South Vietnam.
- To accept the existence of two zones of control, two administrations, two armies and three political forces in South Vietnam.

These provisions created extremely favourable conditions, both military and political, for the victorious Spring 1975 general offensives completely to liberate the South and reunify our Motherland.

Question: Kissinger treats Watergate and the downfall of the Nixon presidency as an arbitrary and irrational event, quite unconnected to the way Nixon conducted policy. Yet the secret telephone tapping and other manoeuvres against political opponents began with the 'secret' bombing of Cambodia and Nixon's decision to obtain a military victory despite US opinion. How did you view Watergate? Did your interpretation of it change at all, as it developed?

Answer: The Watergate scandal was the biggest and worst political crisis in the US history and also a natural aftermath of the aggressive war in Indochina, and dirty tricks carried out by successive US administrations, particularly the Nixon administration in an attempt to conceal their deeds from and deceive the American people.

Question: In your Foreign Ministry's White Paper, *'The Truth about Vietnam-Chinese relations over the last thirty years',* Mao's inviting Nixon to Peking is described as a decisive turning point and a betrayal of the Vietnamese, the Indochinese, and the world revolutions. What do you think would have happened if Mao had not imposed this policy?

Answer: If the Peking ruling circles had pursued a correct revolutionary line, the fight of the Vietnamese people would have had much better conditions on the way to victory and US imperialism would have met even more difficulties and the world revolutionary movement would certainly have been marked by more vigorous developments. Nonetheless, the revolutionary currents will continue to develop.

Question: In the *White Paper,* America and China are charged with making a deal in which the delivery of a divided Vietnam and a stable Thieu regime would be traded for Peking's supremacy over Taiwan. Indeed Kissinger states specifically that there was a 'linkage' between Taiwan and Vietnam established in the Shanghai communique (*The White House Years, p.* 1077). He also says that around the issue of Taiwan there was not 'a sharp bargain but . . . a joint understanding'. What, in your opinion, was the understanding reached by the US and China in 1972?

Answer: The 1972 Agreement between the United States and China marked the beginning of the open and comprehensive collusion between imperialism and the Peking rulers. It meant that the US would be assisted by China to settle the Vietnam question to the advantage of the US and disadvantage of Vietnam, and would use the 'China card' to oppose the Soviet Union and the world revolutionary movement.

Exploiting the United States' need to solve the Vietnam question in its favour, and its anti-Soviet and anti-world-revolution positions, the Chinese rulers attempted to turn China into one of the three world superpowers, so as to have a say in solving international problems, expecially in Asia, and to seek a solution for the Taiwan question.

Question: When the US demanded changes and commitments in addition to your draft of the Accords, did it try to pressure Vietnam into a Cambodian cease-fire? In particular, it has been said, by Cambodians, that the Christmas bombing was in part an attempt to get a Cambodian settlement, and that Kissinger threatened Hanoi, should Phnom Penh fall to the Khmer Rouge. Is this true?

Answer: Our position was that Vietnam should not negotiate on Kampuchea's behalf. Vietnam respected the independence and sovereignty of the Kampuchean people and supported them, whether negotiating or fighting.

The aims of the Christmas B52 bombing by the US were not to put pressure on Vietnam

Next week, Anthony Barnett concludes his three-part series on Cambodia.

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so as to obtain a solution to Kampuchea, I have discussed its purpose above.

Kissinger made no threat as to the possibility of Phnom Penh falling to Pol Pot – Ieng Sary, and we ourselves helped the Kampuchean people and contributed to the liberation of Phnom Penh.

Question: What did Kissinger say the United States would do to Cambodia, if a cease-fire was not obtained there?

Answer: Mr Kissinger made no reference to this question.

Question: It has been argued, I think plausibly, that the tremendously intensive American bombing of Cambodia from January to August 1973, so brutalised the countryside and punished the revolutionary forces, that it helped to create the social and psychological conditions that made the draconian measures of the Pol Pot regime possible. But if Pol Pot had accepted a cease-fire the bombing would not have taken place. Furthermore, the revolutionary forces were perhaps better placed to go over to political struggle in Cambodia than they were in South Vietnam. Why did Pol Pot refuse a cease-fire in 1973, in your view? What arguments were put to the Cambodian leadership by Pham Hung, when talks were held in Cambodia at that time? What do you think would have happened had they agreed to a cease-fire?

Answer: The bombing of Kampuchea from January to August, 1973 was not much heavier than before. If comparison is to be made according to the American sources, the amount of US bombs dropped in Laos and North Vietnam was much more than that dropped in Kampuchea.

The genocidal policy of Pol Pot – Ieng Sary was in the main more Maoist than Mao's, was abetted and aided by the Peking rulers and had nothing to do with the US bombing in Kampuchea. Shortly before Phnom Penh was liberated, they had already started a cruel and much-hated policy in newly liberated areas.

In their mind, a cease-fire at that time was not to their advantage. With the Paris Agreement signed, they knew that the US defeat was obvious. The Agreement paved the way and created favourable conditions, both military and political, for the victory of the Kampuchean revolution. Therefore, they wanted to fight to the end in order to seize total power in Kampuchea, rather than to have a cease-fire and then to negotiate a political solution.

Question: Given the importance of these issues, did you try to circulate your own arguments and explain your own policy to Cambodian cadres, given that your forces were there at the time?

Answer: It is our view-point that the affairs of Kampuchea are to be settled by the Kampucheans.

Question: How did you relate to the Cambodian revolution after the breach of 1973? Did you make any efforts to supply aid and assistance? Were Vietnamese forces able to obtain rice supplies from Cambodia at all?

Answer: After 1973, the Vietnamese forces were faced with obstacles created by Pol Pot, to their moving about and purchasing necessary foodstuffs. Yet we continued giving them aid and helped them in the transportation of weapons and ammunitions and assisted them in other necessary things in the liberation of Phnom Penh.

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Christopher Hitchens

Oxford's unlikely liaisons

THERE COMES a time in the life of all police states when their representatives go just a little bit too far. In the case of Czechoslovakia, there have been many such moments. But the guardians of law and order really exceeded themselves when they interrogated Professor Jan Patocka. Formerly Professor of Philosophy at Charles University in Prague, Patocka emerged from an honourable retirement to help write Charter 77. Despite his advanced age, the police interrogated him mercilessly until he suffered a heart attack. He was taken to hospital, but the police pursued him even there, persisting with their questioning until he had a brain haemorrhage and died. Julius Tomin and his philosophy seminars go under the name of 'The Patocka University' as a mark of respect: respect both for philosophy and for courage.

The Czech regime's methods of philosophical discourse have led to an unusual and interesting cross-fertilisation. It might not have been predicted that the Oxford school of philosophy would take an activist position on anything much – Ernest Gellner's remark about 'the Narodniks of North Oxford' being, in many minds, the summation of a school of thought. However, when the Patocka University appealed to the philosophers of the world for support, Oxford was the first (and so far the only) faculty to respond.

Julius Tomin had written, in May of 1978, to Oxford, Harvard, the Free University of West Berlin and the University of Heidelberg. Perhaps characteristically, Oxford mislaid the letter, and the subfaculty of philosophy did not see it until January of 1979. However, at that meeting it was unanimously resolved to send three faculty members to Prague in the spring and summer. The programme of visits since then has included speakers from London, from Regensberg and from the Australian National University. But in Prague, whatever the nationality or language of the guest, he or she is always known as 'the Oxford visitor'.

Tomin's own work as a philosopher has aroused considerable interest in the West. He has been invited to give the Vaughan Memorial Lectures at Balliol College, Oxford (last delivered by Jurgen Habermas) and has been elected a member of the Aristotelian Society. In a Czechoslavakia without 'normalisation', he might have risen to the eminence of a Patocka. Indeed, he deliberately gave up a secure job in an American university in order to return to his home country after the 1968 invasion. The party hack who denounced him in a Prague newspaper – referring throughout to one 'Julian Bobin, parasite and pseudo-philosopher' and attacking him as 'a psychopath' – was certainly less patriotic than Tomin.

THE CZECH authorities have also exposed their bad faith in other ways. They may denounce Tomin now as a corrupter of youth, but there was a time when they offered him 50,000 crowns to translate Greek philosophy into Czech – *if* he gave up his seminars. Never was hemlock refused so firmly.

The hard/soft routine has been sustained by threats of psychiatric detention (on one occasion, and to the eternal credit of the doctor concerned, a request for the internment of Tomin was refused) and by the sort of physical pressure detailed in the NS two weeks ago. The fact that Tomin's flat has been under a five-month siege speaks for itself. So does the bullying of his children and the illegal maltreatment of foreign visitors.

The strength of bureaucracy is also its weakness. When Tomin first wrote to Oxford he mentioned that there was nothing illegal, even in the Czech 'constitution', about people visiting him to discuss philosophy. He also pointed out drily that:

> Our country needs foreign currency (the living standards of the representatives and executors of state power cannot these days be maintained without Western goods) and so foreigners are welcome. You thus have an opportunity to come to Czechoslovakia and to visit us.

Since that invitation, philosophers as varied in their outlook as Professor Charles Taylor and Roger Scruton (reading, as it were, from Left to Right) have taken up the offer. So have Alan Montefiore and, as he reported after his illegal deportation, Dr William Newton-Smith. Others no less distinguished have also made the trip but, in the present abysmal circumstances, prefer to remain anonymous.

This is partly because they want to go again. All the guests concur in the view that Tomin's class has an exceptionally high standard of discussion and interest. This is partly because of the book famine in Czechoslovakia (a famine, be it said, that is man-made). One visitor came from West Germany with eight copies of the works of Berkeley; Oxford sent ten copies of the writing of David Hume; the Patocka students themselves unearthed a few editions of William James.

The result of this amateur but highly concentrated effort is an extraordinary freshness and originality in discussion. Visiting speakers find that no assumption is taken for granted, and no premises established without debate. The mere fact that young people will take such risks to attend is proof enough of the vitality of the proceedings. (These are, incidentally, open to anybody including the secret police. No invitation or introduction is required.)

ONE STRESSES these points in order to emphasise that nobody is patronising Tomin. Kathy Wilkes, a philosophy tutor at St Hilda's College, Oxford, re-wrote an article on Plato for the *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* after one conversation with him about the first draft. The fact that he had written a book on Descartes only came to light after a long acquaintance between him and his supporters.

The brutal disruption of two weeks ago is more ominous than it might sound to those who are used to news of police-state tactics from Prague. Until recently, very few of Tomin's visitors had been interfered with – though they were undoubtedly under surveillance. It is feared by some who are close to the exchange that Tomin will be charged with subversion or 'parasitism' (the delightful charge which the Czechoslovak state reserves for those it has made unemployed just as it charges rent for prison cells from those awaiting trial). Even so, there is some evidence that victims with international support fare better than those without. In the meantime, and whatever opinion may be held about some of Tomin's particular theses, we have to defend the work of the free intelligence and bear in mind, as someone said, that 'the imagination, like certain wild animals, will not breed in captivity'.

Donations for the Patocka University should be sent to The Secretary, Sub-Faculty of Philosophy, 10 Merton Street, Oxford.

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London Diary

☐ It was billed as the Debate of the Decade, and nearly 3,000 people travelled to the Central Hall, Westminster on Monday evening to witness this historic dialogue between the parliamentary Left and 'the rest'. There was some heckling from Irish lobbyists, although most of the speakers found this fairly acceptable. What really disrupted the occasion was the continual shouting from a group of 30 self-styled 'autonomists'. 'These people are supporters of the Red Brigades,' said Tariq Ali when I spoke to him the following day. Paul Foot, another speaker at the meeting, was also angry: 'Don't call them anarchists – any self-respecting anarchist would be shocked at their behaviour. These were people who don't believe in discussion at all. They had come to wreck. "Benn is shit" was the peak of their particular argumentative position.' *Who are they? I tracked them down to* Rising Free, a bookshop in Islington, where an anonymous spokesman for the autonomists told me that they had indeed set out to wreck the meeting. 'The Left don't represent any new ideas in revolutionary politics,' he explained. 'We represent the proletarian class; the Left don't represent anything but ideology. By interrupting the meeting last night we were making a genuine revolutionary intervention.' Eh? 'The revolution will only come by freedom from all constraints: that meeting was full of constraints. Yesterday it nearly broke out into a fight and we were quite prepared for that.' My colleague Christopher Hitchens was, in fact, punched in the chest by one of these charmers, who seem quite happy to use violence on almost anyone: 'Our struggle is against all facets of capital – including the Left, teachers, social workers and journalists. If the working class takes up armed struggle we will be its ruling conscience.' My autonomist added cheerfully that he and his pals had forged over 100 tickets for the meeting; they used some themselves and sold the rest outside Central Hall, making a profit of £75. 'It paid for our fare there and back, and a few drinks afterwards.' Sir Keith Joseph should be proud of them.

☐ The week's other Great Debate was also held in Westminster on Monday evening: the House of Commons addressed itself to the question of whether British athletes should go to the Olympic Games. The clouds of steam created by this argument over the past couple of months seem to confirm Orwell's opinion that sport is an unfailing source of ill-will, but Monday's debate was a surprisingly calm occasion, with a number of MPs – including Tories – making cogent points. Eldon Griffiths, for example, said that if athletes were to be expected to give up the chance of a lifetime they were entitled to look to the government and the rest of the nation to make equivalent gestures. (I'm afraid this inevitably conjured up the scene from *Beyond the Fringe* where the CO says to a hapless pilot: 'We need an empty gesture at this stage of the war – and we've decided it'll be you.') Winston Churchill, another Tory, said that those who go in quest of devalued gold in Moscow will be paying tribute to the guardians of the world's greatest concentration camp. I was therefore grateful to Mark Jenkins (author of a recent book on the Bevanites – hurry while stocks last) for pointing out to us the existence of something called the Great Britain-USSR Association, whose aims are to foster 'cultural and social contacts of all kinds between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union'. It says in its brochure that it works 'in close collaboration' with the Soviet Embassy in London. Sir Harold Wilson (remember him?) is President of the Association, and its council members include those well-known Bolsheviks Iain Sproat and Winston Churchill. Churchill denies that his participation in the GB-USSR Association is rather at odds with his line on the Olympics: 'I am there not in respect of any demonstration of approval for the clique that happen to be running the Soviet Union at any given moment but in the interests of friendship between us and the people of the Soviet Union.' I suggested that this argument was also justification for going to the Games, but he assured me there was a difference as the Soviets can't extract any propaganda value from professional, educational and social exchanges. I think if I were a leader writer on *Pravda* I should believe otherwise.

☐ It may seem odd to recommend that students of American politics should view *The Last of the Blue Devils* at the Electric Cinema Club in Portobello Road. This movie was made last year by means of assembling as many survivors as possible from the heroic days of Kansas City jazz, and putting them in a union hall along with plenty of recording equipment, cameras and booze. The approximate rule with jazz musicians is that if they don't flame out at 30 they live forever, so there is marvellous footage of people like Count Basie, Jay McShann and Jo Jones exchanging relaxed music and equally relaxed reminiscences of the Thirties, when Kansas City under Boss Prendergast was about the most wide-open town in the US (and, coincidentally or otherwise, the most fertile musically). The political note is introduced by Milton Morris, reflecting that KC's distinguished alumni weren't exclusively musicians. 'We had everything happening. At that time, the man who wound up President in the White House, Harry Truman, was working a precinct down at 14th . . .' Whether running a whorehouse is the right apprenticeship for a Leader of the Free World is perhaps arguable. What is surely clear is that not one of the present crop of aspirants would have been any use at the job.

☐ At a lunch at the Savoy on Monday Willie Whitelaw, on behalf of the British Association of Industrial Editors, presented Sir James Goldsmith with a Waterford glass decanter as his award for being named 'Communicator of the Year, 1980'. My first reaction on hearing this was to assume that it was a prank of some sort – but, alas, not so. BAIE, it turns out, is not a collection of Fleet Street industrial scribes but the professional association of people who work on companies' house magazines. Even so, were these people seriously suggesting that Sir James had made – in the words of the citation – an 'outstanding contribution to communication in trade and industry'? The same Sir James Goldsmith who has said that he doesn't approve of the 'see-through society'? The same man who behaves with such hostility towards the *Sunday Times* and *Private Eye*, two publications which have done more than most to communicate what really goes on in trade and industry? The same chap who is so unforthcoming when diligent business journalists attempt to discover the true structure of his own businesses? Apparently so. 'Obviously the judges felt that this did not override the importance of setting up a weekly news magazine,' says Ken Bartlett, secretary general of BAIE – and he should know, since he was one of the three judges. By contrast, I gather that Sir James had rather a rough ride last week when he was guest speaker at the Grosvenor House, at the annual dinner for the *Campaign* press awards to the advertising industry. As he launched into his usual post-prandial meanderings, he found to his astonishment that the assembled ad-people began to heckle vigorously, and the end of the speech was greeted not with applause but with a slow handclap. These autonomists get everywhere.

☐ About a week ago the *Guardian* Diary reported a rumour that Lord Hartwell, proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*, had written a letter, under a pseudonym, to one of his own papers. Lord Hartwell did not confirm it, and the *Guardian* apologised in advance to the letter writer – a Mr Norman M. Chapman – should he be a real person. Now I can reveal (as we diarists say) that Hartwell was indeed the author of a letter to the editor published in the *Sunday Telegraph* of 17 February, suggesting that the Chancellor should introduce a hefty levy on bank profits. 'Now, Sir, shoot a hole in that!' concluded the genial Mr Chapman. Lord Hartwell is still refusing to say much about it – I made several attempts to contact him this week and was eventually rewarded with a brief written statement, read by his secretary, in which he apologised for seeming curmudgeonly and declined to elaborate – but in the event his comments were not needed, since the story was confirmed by sources close to Lord Hartwell: in short, his wife. 'It's a bit of a family joke,' she told me. 'I used to do it with letters to *Tribune* to bait Michael Foot.' Was it true that her husband had sometimes written letters using female names? 'Oh yes,' she gurgled, 'I think he has.' Lady Hartwell herself (whose civilian name is Pamela Berry) has little need of pseudonyms to hide her identity. On election night last year a colleague of mine was asked where he was watching the results; he replied that he would probably go to Pamela Berry's party. 'Oh,' said the questioner, disappointed, 'I thought you were going to Lady Hartwell's.' If the House of Lords were abolished at least this sort of confusion could be avoided.

Francis Wheen

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ An Irishman, whose followers claim he once restored his pet goldfish to life, has set up in business as 'God' in a two-storey bungalow in Bognor Regis. – *Daily Telegraph* (J. R. Soames)

☐ The Prime Minister and Mr Denis Thatcher were hosts at a reception held yesterday at 10 Downing Street in honour of entrepreneurs. – *The Times* (J. E. C. Thornton)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Images and conspiracies

From Michael Ami-Kan

The inhabitants of Kiryat Shmona in Israel did not demonstrate simply because of redundancies as Ian Black suggests (NS 29 February), but mainly because of the structural discrimination practised against them as Sephardi Jews. Kiryat Shmona is a 'development' town on the northern border with Lebanon and its function is largely to provide surrounding kibbutzim with cheap unskilled labour. A report in the Israeli establishment *Ha'aretz* last June outlined the forms of discrimination from which this town suffers by comparison with neighbouring kibbutzim which are predominantly Ashkenazi.

David Pryce-Jones in his review in the same issue tries to whitewash the scandals about torture in Israel. In fact, the Israeli press itself has published information on torture together with ample proof. They have also condemned torture practised against both Sephardi Jews and Palestinians. That such things occur was so widely known in Israel that by 29 June 1979 the *Jerusalem Post* was able to give editorial support to the statement by Judge Haim Cohen condemning torture outright. He stated that it actually impeded the course of justice since, apart from anything else, both guilty and innocent alike confess to escape electric shock.

25 Slades Gardens, Enfield, Middx

From Nathan Weinstock

Authors are known to be horribly conceited. Nevertheless, may I comment on David Pryce-Jones's review of my book (NS 29 February)? Of course, he is entitled to his own opinion so that it's just too bad that he considers *Zionism: False Messiah* as just another essay in demonology. What rattles me is his evidence. Take the reproach of deliberately ignoring the Jewish proletariat who actually went to Palestine. If anything, the Jewish proletariat of Eastern Europe was entirely anti-Zionist and flocked to the *Bund* and CP, both staunch opponents of the Zionist movement. The only Zionist current that could have claimed a working-class backing was the Poale-Zion; typically this party was very much the maverick of the Zionist camp, rejecting collective settlements on Arab land and refusing to join the World Zionist Organisation.

Then again David Pryce-Jones regrets that my absolutism leads me to 'pay oblique compliments to the Fascist Stern gang'. Now who is being a reductionist here, I wonder. I notice that in the very same issue of the NS, Ian Black comments on the 'genuine anti-Imperialism' of the Stern gang's leader Nathan Yellin-Mor and on his subsequent leftist evolution. So maybe all isn't black and white after all nor are the Stern gang just plain Fascists.

Brussels, Belgium

From Philip Braithwaite

After mentioning Isaac Deutscher, David Pryce-Jones tells us; 'What the Jew is not allowed to be in the Marxist interpretation is the man on the run from those who would kill him precisely because he is a Jew.' Your reviewer is extremely wide of the mark, at least with regard to Deutscher, who, in an article on Israel, written in 1954, confessed to having 'long since abandoned my anti-Zionism, which was based on a confidence in the European labour movement, or, more broadly, in European society and civilization, which that society and civilization have not justified. If, instead of arguing against Zionism in the 1920s and 1930s [in favour of revolutionary internationalism and an attempt to solve the Jewish problem by transforming social existence in general] I had urged European Jews to go to Palestine, I might have helped to save some of the lives that were later extinguished.'

'For the remnants of European Jewry', continued Deutscher, 'the Jewish State had become an historic necessity.' And yet, that recognition did not make him a Zionist. From a sinking ship, he argued, people jump on to a raft; the jumping is for them 'an historic necessity' and the raft 'the basis of their whole existence. But does it follow that the jumping should be made into a programme, or that one should take the raft-State as the basis of a political orientation?'

87 Station Road, Birmingham 14

Fixing up addiction figures

From David Clark

John Shirley and Danah Zohar ought to think a bit more critically before leaping into print to defend their mythical figure of 40,000 heroin addicts (NS 14 March). Their letter takes the 1979 estimated total of 4,900 addicts known to the Home Office and then says, 'unofficially Government sources acknowledge that, at best, only one in four addicts register with them'. What does this authoritative-sounding word *acknowledge* mean? It means *guess*, just like the rest of us.

Most readers may not understand that the 4,900 figure refers to all addicts to all narcotics 'passing through' the index in any one year. We don't yet have the full 1979 figures, but in 1978 there were 2,018 addicts known to be receiving drugs at the beginning of the year, and 2,406 at the end. During the year 4,122 had 'passed through'. Of the 1,716 no longer recorded (i.e. 4,122 minus 2,406), 60 had died, 484 had gone to prison or similar institutions and 1,172 were no longer seeking treatment. Of the 2,406 left at the end of the year, only 215 were being prescribed heroin in any combination.

Of course 'some doctors think that only one in eight of their patients is registered, while others put the ratio as high as one in ten'. Black market addicts who decide to register with a clinic are, by definition, previously unregistered. That's why they go to the clinic. But it doesn't mean that there are eight or ten unregistered addicts out there for every one who is registered. Nor is there any logic in multiplying the total of all known narcotics addicts by the highest total suggested by a doctor, then multiplying by the average annual growth rate to give a figure of 56,472 for 1980.

In 1966 the American Vera Institute used the same kind of pseudo-science to suggest that by 1972 Britain would have exactly 10,819 heroin users. In the event, the index showed a total of 1,615 at year end 1972.

Zohar and Shirley should ask themselves a few simple questions like: where are all these addicts, where do they score and how do they support their habit? If we assume there are 20,000 of them in London and that they spend a relatively modest £100 a week on their habit, that's a £2 million weekly turnover. Where does all their money come from? Street crime? Prostitution? Or are they all famous rock stars or the children of the wealthy? Why don't more of them show up in police stations, courts, prisons, rehabilitation units or the death-by-overdose statistics?

91 Grove Lane, London SE5

Free press

From Edward W. Barrett

Claudia Wright's article on the *Columbia Journalism Review* (NS 29 February) indicates that she had time only to take down in detail the highly imaginative tale from a young editor who had been fired, to make a perfunctory call to the magazine's editorial chairman, and then to let go full blast with the imaginative tale. For example: (1) 'Elliott and Barrett first tried to stifle the news.' The announcement of the editor's termination was delayed to give the ex-editor time to choose among several options; the final version was basically his version. (2) '"Differences over policies and procedures" . . . was corrected in a second statement fed to the *New York Times* to refer to . . . "consistent inability to send an issue to press on time".' The second statement was issued only after a gentlemen's agreement (to limit comments to the original announcement) was breached when the AP reported the ex-editor as attributing his departure to less-than-honourable behaviour by the editorial chairman (and dean) and the publisher. (3) 'Several stories in the issue soon to be published triggered the showdown.' As is provable by memos, the firing resulted, after repeated warnings, from consistent failure to come close to a single deadline and from inability to delegate or to direct a staff. (4) 'Elliott had been returning galleys . . . the margins filled with roaring scribble suggesting revisions and ordering deletions . . .' The returned galleys show only occasional non-roaring suggestions regarding clarity, fairness or accuracy.

(5) The article indicates that Elliott was 'embarrassed' by an article about the Jamaica *Gleaner*. Elliott dealt with the matter only twice – once when he said 'OK on the *Gleaner* story. Just make sure it's accurate and fair.' Later, in the presence of others, he told the editor that the completed story 'seems OK'. (6) 'Since Manoff took over subscription renewals had gone up to their highest level ever.' This was simply a continuation of a four-year upward trend. (7) 'Elliott and Barrett would stop their editor from getting bolder.' Boldness was to be found in the pages of the *Review* long before this particular editor. We cite such past stories as Stuart Loory's article on 'the CIA and its use of the press' and 'Coors Brews the News', about the Brewer-owned TV stations, among many. These were forthright, bold pieces but they also sought to be fair and responsible. (8) The article makes it appear that only a courageous young editor forced through articles on the *Wall Street Journal*, the press treatment of the Pope's visit and on Iran. All three were approved for publication by all hands, though I opted to express in print reservations about certain points. (9) The article misquoted me about an editorial on the CIA. What I actually said, offhandedly, was 'Some characters will probably charge us with being anti-American, but, sure, let's run it'. (10) As I have said elsewhere, if it is 'political' to insist on accuracy and elemental fairness, to expect observance of publishing schedules, and to demand reasonable direction of a staff, then we must plead guilty.

Columbia Journalism Review, 700 Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York

Appeal

From Fran Hazelton

It has been announced that the Iraqi Foreign Secretary will shortly be visiting Lord Carrington. While relations between Britain and Iraq are being developed British public opinion should not forget the gross violation of human and democratic rights in Iraq. The Iraqi Baathist regime has a well-deserved reputation for brutality. According to Amnesty International, Iraq has the highest rate of political executions in the Middle East – an average of one every three days last year.

Four leading Iraqi intellectuals are at present in detention under torture or in hospital as a result of torture. Dr Safa Al-Hafidh and Dr Sabah Al-Durrah, Dr Jaffa Al-Jaffa and Dr Hussain Al Shahristani. The lives of these four, if they are still alive, and their fate is unknown, can be saved by international pressure. NS readers are urged to write to Siddam Hussein, Presidential Palace, Baghdad, Iraq, and the Ambassador, Embassy of Iraq, 21, Queen's Gate, London SW7. Or telephone the Embassy 01-584 7141.

Committee Against Repression & for Democratic Rights in Iraq, PO Box 210, London N10

Near to home

From Julian Barnes

How strange and puzzling that in the course of a 1200-word article in which the brief inconveniences of 'the Irish writer' Margaretta D'Arcy are compared to the sufferings of Sakharov (NS 14 March), John Arden nowhere finds quite the space to mention that the Irish writer, Miss D'Arcy is, in fact, Mrs John Arden.

61 St George's Avenue, London N7

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Oxford University Press

The Embattled Mountain

F.W.D. Deakin

With the world's attention focused on Yugoslavia, F.W.D. Deakin's account of his mission to Tito and the Partisans in 1943 is of special interest. 'For its vivid and masterly account of the Partisan War, his book is assured of an important place in the annals of World War II.' Fitzroy Maclean in *The Observer.* 'Mr Deakin's book is a gripping and beautifully written account of his historic mission to Tito.' *The Economist.* £6.50

Origins and Destinations

A. H. Halsey and others

'An important landmark in empirical sociology's contribution to the understanding of educational opportunities . . . . a major contribution.' *The T.H.E.S.* £11 paper covers £4.95

Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain

John H. Goldthorpe and others

'A truly "mobile" society, in which men of talent and character transcend poverty and parentage and rise to wealth and power, is not possible within a profoundly unequal nation . . . . life in Britain is not like that. Anyone who has doubts should read this book.' Roy Hattersley in the *Sunday Times.* £12 paper covers £4.95

An Invitation to Mathematics

Norman Gowar

Many people are frightened of mathematics and yet would like to have some understanding of the subject. This book is for them. It tackles some of the most important ideas lying at the heart of mathematics, in an understandable and readable way. £9.50 paper covers £3.95

Cosmic Landscape

Michael Rowan-Robinson

Until the Second World War astronomy consisted almost entirely of the study of the narrow band of wavelengths visible to the human eye. This book explains, in non-scientific language, the revolution that has taken place in astronomy in the past forty years. £4.50

John Ruskin and Rose La Touche

Her Unpublished Diaries of 1861 and 1867

Edited by Van Akin Burd

'Extensively researched and impeccably presented . . . . Ruskin's perennial fascination lies in the mystery of his nature, and if this book does little to solve that mystery it increases the fascination.' *The T.L.S.* 'It is a tribute to the professor's art, both as scholar and storyteller, that the readers's heart is firmly in his mouth.' *The Observer.* £6.95

The Wyatts

An Architectural Dynasty

John Martin Robinson

'A brilliant historical study of the vagaries of English architecture . . . . a splendid story, beautifully told.' Angus Wilson in *The Observer.* 'Extremely readable, agreeably illustrated, and full of useful, curious, or entertaining information.' Mark Girouard in *The Listener.* Illustrated £25

Symbols of Eternity

The Art of Landscape Painting in China

Michael Sullivan

Designed for the general reader newly approaching Chinese landcape painting, this is an introduction to the underlying philosophical ideas, aims, and achievements of the painters, and the main stages in the development of the art over nearly two thousand years. Illustrated £10

Making Sense

Geoffrey Sampson

Geoffrey Sampson emphatically favours the creative view of language and shows the discipline of 'theoretical linguistics' as a self-created, self-directed, self-justifying – though possibly unconscious – academic hoax. £7.95

Britain in the Age of Economic Management

John Wright

'This admirably clear book is aimed chiefly at the student market. But it must be said immediately that it is ideal for anyone interested in economics and what actually happens in the economy.' *The Economist.* £5.50 paper covers £2.95

The Pleasure Dome

The Collected Film Criticism 1935-40

Graham Greene

'A book that anyone interested in the movies, in Greene, in the thirties, or in plain good writing, will enjoy immensely . . . the finest collection of film criticism since *Agee on Film* and ought to ensure Greene a place among the most perceptive movie writers of our time.' *The Times.* Illustrated £3.50 *Oxford Paperbacks*

Caligari's Children

The Film as Tale of Terror

S.S. Prawer

Caligari's Children looks at the appeal of terror in the cinema from various angles. It sketches the evolution of the 'horror-movie,' analyses sequences from films in which the evocation of terror plays a dominant part – ranging from *Nosferatu* to *Dracula* – and discusses the devices film-makers have used in their efforts to portray and evoke terror. Illustrated £8.95

Daddyji

Ved Mehta

Ved Mehta's father, born in a mud-and-plaster room in a village in the Punjab, grew up to study medicine in Lahore and did notable work on cholera, malaria, and tuberculosis in England, India, and the U.S. His son's book is an affectionate portrait of a remarkable man. Illustrated paper covers £2.25 *Galaxy Books*

Summer Palaces

Peter Scupham

In this, Peter Scupham's third book, the poet's eloquent and elaborate style lends itself to a collection of greater variety than before. It is built around four poem sequences: 'Three Sisters', 'A Cambridgeshire Childhood', 'Megaliths and Water', and 'Nature'. Paper covers £3

The Venetian Vespers

Anthony Hecht

The Venetian Vespers follows Anthony Hecht's first two collections: *The Hard Hours* (1967) and *Millions of Strange Shadows* (1977). The long narrative title poem is complemented by several shorter and less formal works, and by translations of a few poems by the Russian poet Joseph Brodsky. Paper covers £3.95

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SPRING BOOKS

John Willett

On the Terrace of Life

The Generation of 1914 by ROBERT WOHL
Weidenfeld £12.95

I wonder how Professor Wohl envisaged this book when he first embarked on it – apparently some ten years ago. Was it ever intended to be an account of *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist,* as suggested to innocent minds by the title and the first part of the blurb: the story of what the First World War really did to those born in the 1890s? Or was he even then set to explore some of the murkier bogs of historiography?

The aim is not clear, because the book itself is an uneasy mélange. One chapter deals in a fairly orthodox, if incomplete, way with some of the best-known members of the 1914 generation – all of them writers, however, which makes them a bit untypical. This is the English section, which will irritate some people by its assumption that Brooke, Sassoon and co. were not just an 'élite' but socially privileged in some way denied to their German and French opposite numbers. Another, at the end, gives the author's own, very sensible, views about what the whole notion of generations amounts to. But the remaining two-thirds of the book is not just historiography but history of historiography, tracing a whole succession of different approaches to generational theory, as it is called in the trade – in other words rival definitions of what constitutes a generation and why generations matter. And the trouble with this is that most generational theorists are bores.

If the First World War gave the author his title and his original impetus, driving him to ask himself what the myth of a 'lost' generation in fact meant, it is the attention paid to the historiographical aspect that sends the book badly off beam so far as its ostensible subject is concerned. For not only does Professor Wohl generally ignore the war's impact on non-combatants and opponents of the war (some of whom had experienced the front-line fighting, with profoundly disturbing effects) but he deals only with those countries which are significant from the historiographical rather than the plain historical point of view.

Thus he says nothing about the 1914 generation in Austro-Hungary, the non-European countries or Russia, which means that fascinating case histories like those of Hasek and Trakl, Kisch and Kokoschka, or the Australian V.C. Hugo Throssell are simply missed out, along with the whole puzzling Russian vacuum. Were there no war poems in Russia, and why did so few artists and writers appear to have the same shattering experiences as their more Westerly counterparts?

Instead we get England, Germany, Italy and France (lacking some obvious figures even among the littérateurs: Apollinaire, Cendrars and Cocteau for a start) and then finally Spain. Spain? Was Spain in the war then? No; and its generation problem dates from sixteen years earlier. But it *was* into generational theory, thanks to Ortega y Gasset, and that is what counts.

Alas, these generational thinkers make a dreary and to most people rather obscure procession. Massis, de Tarde and Mentré in France, Edgar Jung, Frank Matzke, Uttmann von Elterlein and E. Günther Gründel in Germany: even if you see figures like Barrès and Maurras looming behind them, they hardly seem worth wading so far into the bog for. Only Karl Mannheim has much that is enlightening to say, though there is a brief and refreshing appearance by Gramsci in the Italian section. But otherwise the reader is left to think about such scholastic conundra as whether the interval between generations is fifteen years (as Dromel and Azorîn fancied) or thirty (Ferrari and Mentré) or maybe quite irregular; or alternatively to take a rather excruciating pleasure in some of these people's more bottomless profundities. Thus Giovanni Papini's: 'Every time a generation presents itself on the terrace of life it seems that the world's symphony is going to have to attack a new tempo.' Or Martin Heidegger's: 'the fateful act of living in and with one's generation completes the drama of human existence ...' (My own prize goes to the *Völkisch* writer Walter Flex: 'For men of great sensitivity death is the greatest experience.')

To Ortega, drunk on his own overstimulating verbiage, 'generation was the most important concept in historiography'. This is not quite the author's view, as he makes clear when it comes to his summarising last chapter. Though he doesn't go as far as I would (one of whose lifelong conclusions from a later war was that age, let alone 'generation', is a quite useless guide to what individuals are like and how they will react) he does see that what matters is the sharing of any major experience, ranging from the Vietnam fighting to the acceptance of drugs, by people of compatible but not necessarily coincidental ages. If he bothers with all these ideologists, then, it is because he feels that the concept of generation was itself a factor in what subsequently happened.

For generational thinking, as distinct from the familiar talk about 'youth' and 'age', which may be self-pitying and divisive but is hardly avoidable in any society, does tend to appeal to reactionaries and Fascists. This is because it allows its adepts to treat human beings as generalised groups rather than variegated individuals, and to do so without the horrid economic implications of the concept of class. Moreover it encourages collective feelings of disgruntlement and opens the way to rhetoric about historic missions, destiny and doom. This makes it understandable that Professor Wohl should pick his examples overwhelmingly from the political Right even when he appears to be putting them forward not as thinkers but as representative figures from the generation of 1914. So we get told about Drieu la Rochelle, Montherlant, Jean Luchaire, Ernst Jünger and Oswald Mosley; but never Barbusse, Vaillant-Couturier, Toller or Ludwig Renn, though these and many others (like my own cousin Wilfred who used to write the nature notes for the *Daily Worker)* were pushed by their war experiences in the opposite direction.

Such singleness of angle might be legitimate enough if the author were clearly setting out to analyse a body of irrational and politically dangerous thinking, as did Aurel Kolnai with the Nazi ideologists in *The War Against the West* or Georg Lukács with his own oddly-assorted *bêtes noires* in *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft.* And it would be more easily acceptable if Professor Wohl could convince the reader, however briefly, that he understood the impact of the war on the anti-Fascists (as they became); unhappily straws, such as his characterisation of *All Quiet on the Western Front* as 'neo-Gothic Grand Guignol', do rather suggest a lack of equally careful study on that side. As it is, this is where the ambiguity about his basic intentions could be seriously misleading to people who take his book at its face value. For to anyone expecting it to do as the blurb says and 'tell the story of the young men – the middle class élite' of 1914, it will appear to be saying that the war, if it did not destroy them, turned most of them into actual or potential Nazi collaborators. Fortunately for the world today this is not the way things really (or *eigentlich)* occurred. But what is historiographically interesting ought never to obscure what is historically true.

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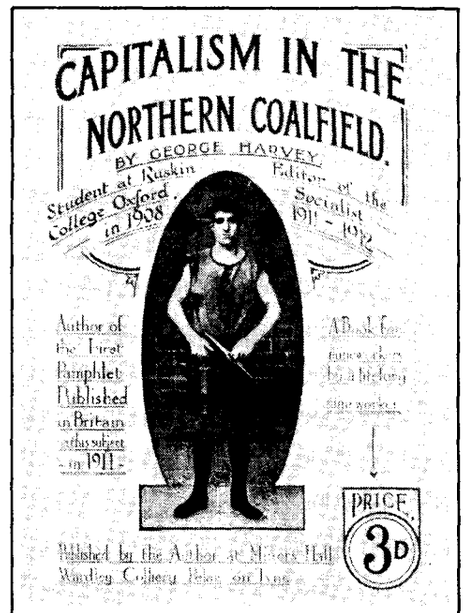
History Workshop 6:
Worms of the Earth

DAVE DOUGLASS describes the miners' passion for history

It's been said a lot of times that in the Durham and Northumberland coalfield, when you're a kid in a pit village you don't get Goldilocks and the Three Bears or Little Red Riding Hood as a bedtime story. You get Churchill and the '26 strike and the betrayal of Thomas and the railwaymen and things like that. And it's this interpretation of miners' history that I want to focus on, because it's this manner of carrying history, of awakening a deep curiosity in it, setting the starting-blocks of learning, which is truly the miners' history. It was, after all, the way we the miners carried our history in recent years before we could read or write. We carried our own history to each other in this fashion for a great many years longer than we've done it by any other fashion. Miners writing their own history, for themselves, about themselves, is still, even in these days of super-media exposure, a rarity.

What I'm talking about is the wealth of oral miners' history; history as carried in stories, in memories, in old arguments, revisited over the bevvie, like: 'That's Harry Carson. He scabbed during the '26 strike.' That kind of history. The miners, particularly those of Durham, Northumberland, Scotland and Wales, have an interest and a passion for history which is almost devotional. It is an element of the pitman's character which at once forces itself upon those who would study the miners. Many a would-be researcher has sat down with a bunch of lads to discover the strike patterns of the 1950s only to be steered time and again to the 1930s. The miners themselves fixed in their own minds the crucial areas which need to be mentioned. This was a phenomenon experienced very strongly by comrades in Cinema Action when they were struggling to make the miners' film. This film was to feature, in bold celluloid, the '72 and '74 strikes. However, at every turn, and in every interview, and in almost every take, the miners swung the focus time and again to 1926.

Twenty years ago, perhaps even 15 years ago, a kid could learn almost every important feature of the miners' history at a very early age and without ever opening a book. Year after year at the Durham gala since babyhood you watched the epic stage of our history parade by on magnificent banners. Each scene was explained as the banner came up, and then again as it did the rounds of the big field, then again as the banner marched away – and this every year from the shoulders of your dad through to adolescence, year after year this kind of thing was reinforced.


CAPITALISM IN THE
NORTHERN COALFIELD.
BY GEORGE HARVEY.
Student at Ruskin College Oxford in 1908
Editor of the Socialist 1911 - 1912
Author of the First Pamphlet Published in Britain on this subject in 1911
PRICE
3D
The cover of a pamphlet by George Harvey

Here was a walking museum – a history book so vividly illustrated that you were left with a perfect chronology of struggle and conciliation (because of course many of the banners portrayed conciliation rather than struggle). Once a lodge reached a meeting place, the mothers picked a corner of the field which was theirs, and picnics were begun, and throughout the day it was a rally point for the dads coming back drunk from the pub and committee men strolling back from the speeches. Many a young 'un, ice cream dripping on his bag of chips, as he fought his way back through the crowds thinking himself lost, has seen, over the milling thousands, the face of A. J. Cook and it's been like a welcome lighthouse. A. J. Cook isn't just something on a page then, it's an absolute personal connection, it's the way you find your way back over the field.

Great events and characters passed through the childhood memories by proxy, by the proxy of those who'd experienced them directly, either informally through front-room conversations of the adults or else at sports days and suchlike where formal speeches are made. I've already written a bit about Geordie Harvey, a great Geordie Bolshevik, and I think I mentioned in that how we grew up with him; even though he was absent we grew up with his presence. People had always been talking about him and the deeds of his time, so much so that by the time it was my turn to go underground, I felt quite able to join in the conversations of the older men as if I'd known the fellow myself intimately.

People like Lady Astor and Churchill were constant targets for vilification. Churchill's record vis-à-vis the miners was, as I've said, passed on from the knee. Astor, equally hated, was credited with almost every bizarre and nonsensical idea in relation to the miners and work, particularly during the war – ideas like the miners should have their beds sent down the pits so they wouldn't come home and they could get more production out, and stuff like that.

The hostility of the ruling class was remembered and is currently remembered in bitter recollection of things said at the time of '26, like when A. J. Cook said: 'We'll let the grass

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grow on those pulley wheels before we submit to tyranny', and Churchill said: 'And I'll make you eat it'. And choice phrases he had like, 'the worms of the earth', and 'drive them back down their holes like rats'. They're reflections of history which not only convey events; they convey the bitterness and the class hatred not found in more academic things.

Of course, there comes a whole bevy of folk tales which, if they're lacking in provable facts, at least convey ongoing attitudes. It's still quite common today for people to tell stories about Winston Churchill knocking Lady Astor off and Lady Astor saying:

> 'And tell me, do the miners do this?'
> 'Well, I suppose so.'
> 'It's far too bloody good for them, have it stopped.'

It's true!

I should mention songs as a way of transporting and appreciating history. Songs, particularly the old ones, are a unique and highly accurate way of understanding old methods, work systems and conditions. Both the serious ones and the humorous ones really roll back the years and give a living picture of life gone by: songs like 'The Waggoner', 'Follow the Horses', and 'The Row Between the Cages'. The old songs are not only still sung and very often in the original settings for which they were written but also there are notable modern writers today. Some of them, like Eddie Pickford sons and grandsons of miners if not pitmen themselves, capture the old pit poeties style and feelings.

We have I suppose a kind of collective memory in which the historical event or process once absorbed is passed on through generations. The old men talking of experiences with ponies, the middle-aged ones, or even myself, can add two penn'orth to this collective experience. Young lads who've never seen a gallowa [pony] thus absorb a whole period and will have 'memories' about them long after the last pony-driver is dead, even if it's by proxy. For example, the 'Collier's Rant' – if I sing that song, as I often do, to modern miners, after 300 years of its history, it's still clearly understandable and relatable to us particularly because of the process of history through yarn that I'm speaking of.

One of the things I consciously associate with the dawning of a consciousness of history, and one I suppose experienced by generations of North Durham miners, was going on walks with my dad along the river banks. These walks were illustrated at almost every yard by descriptions and stories of this ruined building or that wooden structure, or a mound of earth from centuries ago, and by the sites of old, disused collieries. I was literally to encounter much of this in *Sketches of the Coal Mines in Northumberland and Durham* by T. H. Hair (1817). Here I was able to fill out the memory gaps and actually see the scenes observable by pitmen before my dad was born. But impressive above all was the walk taken twice a week past Jarrow Slake and the scene of degradation to the miners. A miner had in the 1830s been executed, covered in pitch, and dragged through the villages, the route being determined by the optimum number of villages remotely near. The body was guarded by the army and it was a demonstration to us of the cost of struggle. Not simply death, but vilification, as the body swung in the gibbet, black and eyeless, up to

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the knees at high tide, and quite clearly visible to every collier on his way to work, and the kids at play. That was the justice that we learned to expect from the state.

The pitmen to me *are* history, the struggle today a continuation of the last one, generation to generation. But the pits themselves, as tributes to the toil, labours and endeavours of decades of workers from ancient times to the present are a source of wonder and fascination among old miners, of constant debate and hours of walking to find where such a legendary pit was supposed to have been. A pitman told me of how he and his marra [work mate] broke into an old working and caught the glimpse of a horse standing upright in the darkness before the inrush of air rendered it to powder. The more common discovery on hitting those old workings is that of ancient chalk messages left on the roof and walls. It's a strange sensation, and one I couldn't touch on in a word nor explain, but to stand there as a pitman and read those messages, and by so doing provide a link between reader and writer, is a guts feeling of miners' history.

Now, how does this rendering of miners' history stand in relation to the countless written histories? Not well, I think. I can't mention here, in the time left, all the books, and I've not read all of them by any means. But the books about the mines themselves, for the reasons I've said, are often far more interesting to us than the ones that purport to be about us. There are realms of wonder in John Bell Simpson's *Coalmining by the Month*. One can push the village coal-trade back to the 9th and 10th centuries with it. And don't think these monks' mines mean a few old lads working in a hole somewhere. I mean, we're talking about real pit work. The sites of the ancient collieries are well illustrated and I can tell you that the facts about the old collieries are still debated by the old miners at Felling, in the Bluebell, or at Wardley in the Ex-Servicemen's Club, or at the Black Bull. With a bit of luck you can follow the old maps, and I've scarcely stood on any place in Geordieland, be it Bill Quay, Bamburgh Castle or Holy Island, and not reflected on the mining done there in years gone by, nor yet sat at peace an hour on the beach without taking off, looking for the abandoned pits. I did it in Antrim, too, by the way, and I was able to do that because the old books on mining itself can add air to the fuel of enquiry.

J. U. Neff, *Rise of the Coal Industry (1930)*, Litchfield's *Our Coal and Our Coal Pits (1853)*, Archer's *Sketch of the Coal Trade in Northumberland and Durham*, sketch-map of places on the Tyne and Wear where coals were being working in 1700, Galloway's big *Annals of Coalmining* – these technical histories of coal work, become the fibre on the skeletons of native tall stories, evidence of things said for generations, and I've never met a pitman not fascinated by them.

The same, usually, is true of novels on the pits. Why there is such a contrast between formal histories and novels I just don't understand. Is it because the majority of the novels on the pits are written by miners, as opposed to the formal histories? It seems to follow, with television dramatisations also like *The Camerons*, *Days of Hope*, the first series of *When the Boat Comes In*, *The Price of Coal*, etc., being spot-on, to my mind anyway. And now again, Radio Hallam, a Radio Sheffield station, is doing a dramatisation of the life of Dick Kelly, the longest-serving miners' MP, and a Geordie De Leonist in the pits, and it's brilliant. In these programmes you can see the banners wave and the old pits talk; they capture the body of history.

Books like McCutcheon's *Troubled Seams*, Jack Lawson's *Peter Lee*, Joseph Halliday's *Just Ordinary*, Jack Lawson's *A Man's Life*, *The Life of Herbert Smith*, George Hitchin's *Pit Yakker*, to name a few novels and biographies or autobiographies, all give you a keen insight into the miners themselves. I just can't understand why the hell when it comes to laboured, self-designated official histories of the miners you get such flat and squelchy, undigestible, boring monologues. Mind, I don't say this is true of them all. Reactionary and downright conciliatory leaders of the miners, ex-miners themselves, have still made better reading than the work of bourgeois historians. Burt is a bloody interesting writer, even though if I'd been alive at the time I'd have probably put a bullet through him.

If I was to end on a positive theme, and as a Trotskyist of course it's a critical one, I would take Fyne's *The Miners of Northumberland and Durham* as perhaps the only formal history worth lending to my mates. His detail with antiquity is, to us, at once riveting. His moralising is annoying, but the sympathy of that writer is moving and although his theme is reformist (or perhaps it's reformist – you've got to see it in its time I suppose) it's undoubtedly about us, there's no question of that. Some of the parts in it, particularly dealing with people like Tommy Hepburn, are very very well done – never been done since in that way. I don't think I can say that for any other writer. Even Page Arnot whose heart is in the right place relates a set of histories which in many ways are abstracted from the miners themselves. Very few histories are about the miners themselves. They are for the most part bureaucratic works in which the miner is treated as synonymous with his union and the union itself identified with the activities of the area officials. Others like Machin's book begin with good intentions but eventually bury themselves in endless lists of figures the very weight of which renders the book unreadable. If, as it is said, most working people learn their socialist theory from the *Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, a novel, and not from the dusty texts of economic theory, perhaps it is similarly true that novels and screen plays by and about miners impart more of the living reality of history than the mighty volumes of formal 'miners' histories.

This is the sixth and last of a series of papers taken from History Workshop 13. The papers will appear in full – together with some 40 others – in *People's History and Socialist Theory* edited by Raphael Samuel, a paperback volume to be published later this year by Routledge and Kegan Paul. The book includes papers on 'Peasant Studies', 'Cultural Studies', 'Capitalism', 'Socialism', 'Feminism', 'Fascism', 'African History' and texts of the exchange on *The Poverty of Theory* between Stuart Hall, Michael Johnson and E. P. Thompson. *History Workshop Journal* would like to thank the editorial staff of the NEW STATESMAN for their care, and for their initiative in proposing this series.

Christopher Hudson

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Christopher Hitchens

Born-Again Conformist

Breaking Ranks: A Political Memoir by NORMAN PODHORETZ *Weidenfeld* £7.95

Anglo-American commentary on 'culture and society' has sometimes been infiltrated by writers who believe they are Orwell but who think like Babbitt. Norman Podhoretz, for example, is to Manhattan what Bernard Levin has become to our commuter belt – a born-again conformist with some interesting disorders of the ego. If this seems an excessive way to begin a consideration of a 'serious' writer, then recall what Alfred Kazin wrote in his essay on the brave days of Podhoretz's own magazine *Commentary*:

> There is real madness to modern governments, modern war, modern moneymaking, advertising, science and entertainment; this madness has been translated by many a Jewish writer into the country they live in, the time that offers them everything but hope. In a time of intoxicating prosperity, it has been natural for the Jewish writer to see how superficial society can be, how pretentious, atrocious, unstable – and comic.

There is the measure of Podhoretz's betrayal. Kazin was writing in 1966. One year later, Podhoretz's published *Making It,* a drooling libation to the bitch-goddess success, in which he made his peace with intoxicating prosperity and abandoned the crisp, even lucid style of his earlier critical writings. *Making It* was an awful book all right, but it did have certain attractive qualities of the chutzpah sort; a kind of eagerness and a wideness of the eyes.

In *Breaking Ranks* the eyes have narrowed appreciably. Podhoretz here makes his peace with modern government, modern war and modern moneymaking. Robert Lekachman has described the jacket photograph as 'The spitting image of a central banker age 70 who has just plunged his country into a depression for its own good'. I think it more closely resembles a man about to unload some underwater real estate. Podhoretz sets down, in the wretchedly affected form of an open letter to his son, the experience of personal assimilation and adjustment; the business of growing up out of 'radicalism'. Like many letters nowadays, this one gives the impression of having been typed rather than written. It is a torment to read, but it does offer some clues to the mind-set of the neo-conservative – more especially the insecure, name-dropping, self-obsessed and slipshod variety.

The first and most obvious thing to say about Podhoretz is that he is an ex-radical in the same way that Richard Nixon is an ex-President. He never had any real claim on the noble title. His boldest ever essay was written on 'The Negro Problem' in 1963, when he advocated planned miscegenation in a style offensively glib. This qualification does not restrain him from a tremendous exhibition of self-regard as the man who single-handedly defied the 'Left Establishment'.

While it is true that New York publishing has had a febrile tendency to the radical chic (and a parallel tendency to overreact to the egregious Podhoretz, thus confirming him in his conviction of martyrdom) you would not find our Norman querying the local narcissism for an instant. It is indeed, for him, the very breath of life. It's no exaggeration to say that his review of the reviews of *Making It* gets more space than Vietnam, desegregation, nuclear weaponry, environmentalism and Watergate all put together. But this is not the chief failure of proportion and perspective. If Manhattan is the navel of the world, and if it groans under a *marxisant* dictatorship, then what does that make Norman? Why, Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn combined – what else?

Should this sound like an overstatement, try the following as an example. Podhoretz has already made the straight-faced claim that '*Making It* did more than fly in the face of the radical party line' and that it made him 'a traitor to [his] class'. Then Norman Mailer dumped on the book too. Listen:

> The fact that Norman Mailer – a founding father and patron saint of the 'Left Establishment' and, though not perhaps quite so brave as he thought he was, much less cowardly in this respect than most – should have felt himself forced into a manoeuvre like this was all the proof anyone could have needed that the 'terror' had become pervasive and efficient enough to make strong men quake and to leave no one feeling safe.

Sic. This preposterous extract gives a representative flavour of Podhoretz's clichéd and dismal style, as well as of his insulting manner. To compare his salon bust-up with the reality of Stalinist terror – leave alone the reality of McCarthyite persecution about which *Commentary* was always so equivocal – makes the paranoia of F. R. Leavis (Podhoretz's old supervisor) seem like mildness itself.

But if only that were all. Just as *Making It* dropped the name of Leavis whenever possible, so *Breaking Ranks* is larded with references to Lionel Trilling. Trilling was an authentic defender of the 'reasonable' and the 'moderate', in a fashion which Podhoretz tries in vain to emulate. He is prayed in aid, often in ways he might not have admired, throughout these pages. Only once is he abused – for advising Podhoretz not to publish *Making It* in the first place. Suddenly, sycophancy is replaced by its twin brother of spite:

> I did not understand until much later, and then only in the light of how Trilling would conduct himself in the coming years, how telling a sign it was of his own failure of nerve.

Everything, then, is defined in relation to Podhoretz. He has all the third-rater's loathing for those people better equipped to face high tasks and principles. Gnawed (if we are to be charitable) by this sense of his own paucity, he's driven to a series of ungenerous and inaccurate sketches.

On Noam Chomsky:

> Far from reciprocating the support he had received from the American government, Chomsky was later to issue a bitter denunciation of his fellow-intellectuals for being pro-American, though unlike him, many he denounced had never received any government grants.

On Irving Howe:

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> Yet in view of the fact that the socialism to which he was committed had no discernible content, I began to think that his stubborn loyalty to the word, as well as the idea, came out of the same primitive loyalty that made so many Jews go on calling themselves Jews . . .

On A. J. Muste:

> Whatever else Muste exuded, he looked and talked even less like a winner than [Norman] Thomas.

On Jason Epstein:

> Jason felt trapped by the life, I felt trapped by the ideas. Together we made a team.

In the sense that he is incapable of representing an opposing viewpoint, Podhoretz does not really qualify as an intellectual at all. The patronising and low-rent level of those (typical) quotations is depressed still further by Norman's other dirty little habit. He throws off names (Delmore Schwartz, Hannah Arendt, Philip Rahv) as if to suggest – never quite claiming – that they somehow associated themselves with the author.

As a result, everything Podhoretz does or says is on the record. One imagines him tooling off to keep a luncheon appointment with a publisher and mentally intoning 'It was on 12 March 1976 that Podhoretz went to have lunch at Harper & Row . . .' But he gets nervous at the absence of witnesses, and makes them up, too.

So it seems that *Making It* was not a catharsis. Nor did its title intend any saving irony. Podhoretz *really is like that*; the child was father to the man. His latest autobiography of an autobiography has the piss and vinegar of the original – only it's gone sour. Even the self-deprecation is now conceited. This finds its corollary, as do his cheap portraits of American radicals, in a certain power-worshipping trait.

For not everyone is insulted here. Lyndon Johnson is held up as a model President, combining agrarian shrewdness with a capacity as 'one of the great senators of modern times'. Daniel Moynihan, of course, can do no wrong (Podhoretz even tells one of his jokes *twice* in his excitement; a joke moreover which he would surely denounce as snobbish radicalism if told by anyone else). He weaves in some slightly ambiguous toadying to the Kennedy family. Leslie Fiedler is described in a rather otiose way as 'the wildly brilliant literary critic'. There's also some posturing around the idea that Podhoretz 'knows' England and can synthesise its finest into the pages of his magazine:

> There were, for example, R. H. S. Crossman, C. A. R. Crosland and Denis Healey – all future cabinet ministers and all talented intellectuals by any definition of that term (they were all, by the way, past or future contributors to *Commentary* as well).

Talented *and* intellectual. Better still:

> Machines and factories – those 'dark Satanic mills' which as William Blake had said as far back as the late eighteenth century were ruining 'England's green and pleasant land'.

Oh *that* Blake.

After all this it's just a weary duty to record that Podhoretz thinks Vietnam was no more than 'a mistake' (and never confronts the case of those he slanders for taking the harder view). Or that he only mentions Kissinger once, to accuse him of being too tender-minded in dealing with the OPEC nations. Or that he feels that 'the underlying belief of American radicalism in the 1960s was that all the sufferings of the human heart were caused and could therefore be cured by laws and kings'. Like all reactionaries who think that they are against the stream, and who appear to believe in his case that American power is controlled by the *New York Review of Books*, Podhoretz winds up mouthing mainstream commonplaces under the illusion that he is saying the unsayable.

One need not be a 'liberal' to object to his desecration of that ambivalent but honourable term. He doesn't even seem to know what he's talking about. On page 117 he speaks slightingly of 'the liberal idea that any and all technological advances were to be welcomed'. Later he records and overstates Trilling's view that the whole literary tradition (and *ipso facto* a goodish bit of what Podhoretz defines as liberalism) stands in opposition to industrialism and the industrial revolution. It doesn't matter so much that both statements are misleading as it does that they do not cohere. Podhoretz, once again, is chewing more than he bites off.

His 'book' concludes with a hail of badly aimed shafts at the sexual minority movements. This is no more than a grace note to the crashing chords of nonsense and venom that have gone before. Podhoretz, the man who says 'in 1970, shortly after my growing doubts about radicalism had coalesced and come to a head in a conviction so blazing that it ignited an all-out offensive against the Movement'; this same Podhoretz ends up whining about contraception and homosexuality. *Commentary* was once flatteringly termed an organ of the 'military-intellectual complex'. To criticise its editor in his own terms would be to echo Kazin's phrasing – 'superficial, pretentious, atrocious, unstable and (unconsciously) comic'.

Jon Silkin

'A black sun streams its fresh medicinal'

A black sun streams its fresh medicinal.
Faces mummer cries tearing the skin
whose kissing twists to mouths.
If you want life, go, croons Antiope
naked as her child.
Theseus by the laundresses' tub
kneels, a wave
of women half-risen –
mixing plasm
cries, the split hands of the clean.
He loves his male child, its small mouth
quirks pain.

The laurels bend honour to grief's
subtle thong.
Hippolytus spatters Phaedra, raucous lily
Of pain, with purity
for the cold election of Aricia.
Venus's sly hatred twists apart
her thighs clench and a dart fastens their need
pure as a wren, to bridal its year's blood.
Neptune ravels him
in space, his horses fracture
in mixed thunderous air
the body of love's pain.
So like the father droops one lust in dew
Neptune through Theseus.

Dreams rise, and sleep
smears the lamps.

Among this week's contributors:

JOHN WILLETT's books include *The Theatre of Erwin Piscator*.

DAVE DOUGLASS, miner and student at Ruskin College 1971-1973, is also the author of *Pit Life in County Durham* and *Pit Talk in County Durham*, both reprinted in *Miners, Quarrymen and Saltworkers*.

JOHN BAYLEY is Warton Professor of English at Oxford. His books include *Tolstoy and the Novel* and *Pushkin: A Comparative Commentary*.

PAUL BINDING is currently working on a study of Stephen Spender.

ANDREW MOTION's collection *The Pleasure Steamers* was published in 1978.

Jacob Epstein

WILD OATS

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Janice Elliottt, **Sunday Telegraph**

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John Bayley

The Russian Sound

The Life of Aleksandr Blok: Vol II The Release of Harmony, 1908-1921 by AVRIL PYMAN *Oxford* £16.50

As a poet, Aleksandr Blok had one almost magic characteristic, seldom found in English poetry, not much more often in the new poetry of America, though American poets try for it, even excessively. Blok echoed his time. He could and did act as a sounding-board both for the dreams and desires of the literary intelligentsia and for the more reverberant, more sinister and impersonal noises that history was making. His voice as he recited had, we are told, a hollow intonation, as if sounds were coming out of the air through the poet's mouth. Pasternak in a poem wrote that all his poetry had great gusts of wind blowing in and among them.

This is a strength for a poet, but a weakness too. Blok was in many ways a very weak man. In her splendid biography, of which this is the second volume, Avril Pyman exhibits with an almost maternal solicitude all the professional and domestic details, often sad and sordid ones, of his forty years of living. As before, we have not only an extraordinarily well-documented and discerning account of the poet's life in this period, but a chronicle of what was going on in the literary and cultural world of the capital. 'Piter', as the fashionable world affectionately referred to it, taking over an originally peasant term, was in its last blaze of cosmopolitan glory, to be extinguished – perhaps for ever – not so much by the revolution itself as by the reaction away from Europe, from fashion and innovation, which set in afterwards, and which was symbolised by the removal of government and all other metropolitan power and influence to Moscow.

Dr Pyman's emphasis on the cultural milieu is important, for Blok was an extrovert: he needed people and events to stimulate him and to record in his own way. Symbolism, the dream he had made in his poems about the 'Beautiful Lady', and in his play set in the middle ages, *The Rose and the Cross*, was not really his thing; he needed emblems and slogans that could be shared with others, and curiously enough he found them when he came to write *The Twelve*, a last blaze-up of inspiration after years of unsuccessful work on *Retribution*, a long introverted poem chronicling and explaining his own origins.

Although when war came he avoided volunteering and going to the front, later getting an *embusqué* job as a construction officer behind the lines, his Baltic parentage and his soldier step-father, along with his own hard-working and meticulous habits, gave him a kind of military personality. *Coriolanus* was a favourite play. He was a devotee of wrestling and aviation, writing a poem about a favourite airman called Schmidt, who crashed to his death before the poet's eyes in 1911. I cannot agree with Dr Pyman that this poem is 'remarkably similar' to Yeats's 'An Irish Airman foresees his Death'. Yeats takes over the airman for his own mythological purposes, but Blok's interest is much more professional: he told a friend that the propeller had introduced 'a new sound into the world' – an observation also made, as it happens, by T. E. Lawrence *à propos* David Garnett's flying story *The Grasshoppers Come*. Blok's widow expressed the opinion that, had he lived, he might well have 'celebrated' the achievements of socialist construction in the Thirties.

Lyubov Dimitrievna stuck with him although the marriage remained unconsummated and she as well as Blok had several affairs, one of which, with a young actor in the company she worked with, made her pregnant. Though she did not want the child, Blok was touchingly pleased, making solicitous preparations for the birth; but the boy, when born, only lived a few days. Blok himself had an extended passion for L. A. Delmas, an actress and singer, complicated by all the usual kinds of unhappiness. He was no Bohemian, disliking the raffish clientèle at the artists' cafe, 'The Stray Dog', and jealous of Lyuba's contacts with that world. He was extremely anxious that Stanislavsky should produce *The Rose and the Cross*, but the great man was cagy, respecting the poet's mystical efforts but determined that the production, if it took place, should be of an emphatically earthy kind, with the pure knight laying down his sword and shield and carrying out the chamber pot from under his beloved's bed. This certainly does anticipate Yeats's ideas in his later plays, and all the conscientious incongruities of modern productions. But Blok was not amused.

On the day in early January 1918, when Blok was feverishly at work on *The Twelve*, two deeply respected Russian democrats who had devoted their lives to political reform were murdered by the Red Guards, an event of the same sort as the killing of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg by the opposite faction in Berlin the following year. Blok noted that the Bolsheviks confiscated and suppressed any newspapers that referred to the event, but he himself, and his poem, were not concerned with such omens but with the sound and significance of the revolution itself, and to this Blok's genius was instantly able to respond. Most of his intelligentsia friends were shocked by *The Twelve*, and the Bolsheviks with whom he had allied himself were not best pleased with it either, because of the sudden apparition of Jesus Christ in the last line, at the head of the Red Guards. For the same reason the poem remains on the Index.

Blok always said that he had no idea what he meant by it – it had just happened – and a great deal of critical ink has been spilt on its exact significance, as statement or symbol. With hindsight one can see the poem's uncanny fidelity to the essentially reactionary spirit that was abroad, and was not at that stage understood by the Bolsheviks themselves, though Lenin's instinct sensed the way people wanted not only a new faith and religion, but a rejection of European progressive ideals, a return to fundamental primitivism, the immortal body in the Kremlin tomb. This Christ of the Old Believers is what the poem may perceive, and had Blok lived he would have had ample opportunity as time went on to see the ways in which, in Communism as in other revealed religions, the spirit killeth but the letter giveth life.

It is often said, and Dr Pyman to some extent echoes the verdict, that Blok became disillusioned. Certainly his new responsibilities with the Bolshevik bureaucracy made him terribly overworked, and like others he was weakened by hardship and privation. Shortly before his death he told a friend that 'all sounds had ceased', a piteous reference to his power for recording in his working life as a poet the *shum vremeni*, the sounds that were echoing down time and history. But the reasons for his end were in reality more prosaic. A syphilitic, he had worn himself out and the disease had rapidly entered its last stages. In Petersburg his death seemed to many the end of the epoch. But had he lived he might well have continued to write about the new Russia and its noises.

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Not Saying Everything

C. Day-Lewis: an English Literary Life by SEAN DAY-LEWIS *Weidenfield* £12.50

In a letter to the poet, John Horder, at that time suffering from acute depression, Day-Lewis wrote: 'If you've ever come across a poem of mine, "The Neurotic", you'll know that I've not been a stranger to the state of mind you're in.' The poem he referred to is indeed well worth 'coming across', not least because it crystallises, I believe, central tensions and ambivalences of Day-Lewis's life and *oeuvre*, and illuminates those of the position he came to occupy in English culture, a position we can see now the more clearly as a result of this comprehensive and sympathetic biography.

Day-Lewis pictures 'The Neurotic' walking through the countryside in spring, a scene he describes in language that Georgian poets (Thomas, de la Mare) might perhaps have appreciated but would never have used – 'oh, Proserpina/Refreshed by sleep, wild-cherry-garlanded/And laughing in the sallies of the willow-wren.' The neurotic moves impervious through so much beauty:

> I will not lift up mine eyes unto the hills
> For there white lambs nuzzle and creep
> like maggots
> I will not breathe the lilies of the valley
> For through their scent a chambered
> corpse exhales.
> If a petal floats to earth, I am oppressed.
> The grassblades twist, twist deep in my breast.

What reply will the poet in his own voice make to these utterances of anguish? . . . Five stanzas follow, and no reply comes. A position is merely amplified in increasingly strained images, and in the last stanza Day-Lewis pronounces sentence:

> Death mask of a genius unborn:
> Tragic prince of a rejected play:
> Soul of suffering that bequeathed no myth:
> A dark tower and a never-sounded horn –
> Call him what we will, words cannot ennoble
> This Atlas who fell down under a bubble.

What sort of a judgment is this ? For surely it is precisely those princes without plays, those men who lack appropriate mythic context who most demand a poet's sympathy and understanding? Day-Lewis turns his back on them, and on that darker side of himself which unites him to them, and in doing so attempts a denial of the darker sides of life itself.

That Day-Lewis knew these his son's life leaves us in no doubt. He suffered, from early adolescence onwards, from protracted bouts of depression, and in his later years from a heightened awareness of transience. Intense sexual susceptibility and passion dominated his life to an unusual degree, providing him with ecstasy but bequeathing him dividedness, guilt, uncertainty, and making a harmonious home-life for many years quite impossible. But in his poems Day-Lewis preferred to confine his anguishes, to ruminate over the particular (and closed) wound rather than use his pain for more universal explorations, thus fulfilling, in a sense not intended by the poet, Heine's famous dictum: '*Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen mach' ich die kleinen Lieder.*'

To follow Day-Lewis through his life is to follow – especially in the last quarter-century of it – failure and success simultaneously. His youthful Communism was blinder, more wilfully romantic, and less informed than that of his famous associates, and was pursued with a singular lack of curiosity about international affairs and the weakest grasp of theory. It evaporated – to be followed by no 'God that Failed' testimony, no subsequent conversion or 'engagement'. Before the Thirties had ended, Day Lewis's poetry had receded into an unadventurousness of thought and language that critics, from Grigson onwards, were not slow to point out. Even when most out of fashion the other Macspaunday poets were (and, I believe, rightly) accorded far more critical respect than Day-Lewis who, failing to develop in vision, failed to develop in his productions too. But his joining in the Forties of the cultural establishment led to his holding many positions of influence, all of which he used with great scrupulousness and imagination of judgment, championing, for

instance, the work of people as unlike himself as Thom Gunn and Elizabeth Jennings. It led to the admirable translation of *The Aeneid*, and later to the position of Poet Laureate where again he exercised authority with wisdom and humanity. And now and again he produced poems of a subdued dignity and tenderness – 'On Not Saying Everything', for example.

Sean Day-Lewis's task in tracing such failure and success and in exploring the reasons for them must obviously have been compounded in its difficulty by his being the poet's eldest son. On the whole he has carried out this task with fairness, percipience, compassion. Though his choice of quotations from his father's poems is often judicious and sensitive, he has little critical – or even indeed biographical – insight into particular works to offer. More specifically his accounts of Day-Lewis engaged on those works which made

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him famous so young, and which at the time seemed to voice the 'zeitgeist' – '*From Feathers to Iron*' (1931), '*The Magnetic Mountain*' (1933) – are disappointingly sketchy. The reader will not receive much illumination of Day-Lewis's relationship to his distinguished contemporaries, Auden, Spender etc., of whom little impression is given. Nor does the author shed much light on Day-Lewis's political beliefs and disenchantments; indeed I suspect he believes that his father was doomed to a gentle, conservative liberalism from the very start! To find satisfactory and analytical accounts of all these subjects we must, of course, turn to Samuel Hynes's *The Auden Generation* (1976) which is particularly perceptive about Day-Lewis.

But Sean Day-Lewis's book does have strengths, and considerable and unusual ones. Whereas the majority of biographies always seem more interesting in their earlier chapters than when detailing the middle and later years of their subjects, *C. Day-Lewis* becomes greatly more absorbing after the somewhat flatly written public-school and Oxford chapters. For what brings out Sean Day-Lewis's biographical gifts most intensely is his father's ardent, relentless amorous life. His falling out of love with his first wife, his involvement with a woman in his Devon village who bore him a child, his nine-year-long affair with Rosamund Lehmann, his happy second marriage to Jill Balcon (of whom an attractive portrait emerges), the 'amours' he obsessively and deviously pursued even within the context of this belated happiness – Sean Day-Lewis describes all these with both subtlety and power. Indeed the middle part of this book provides one of the most moving accounts I have read of the dilemmas of a man who discovered his full potential for passion only after the onset of middle-age, and, for whom, the demands of the heart and genitals were, until the last years, always the only real road to satisfaction and fervour.

The other great strength of the book relates to its subtitle – 'An English Literary Life'. It opens a window from which to survey anew English culture, its merits and its flaws, though Sean Day-Lewis is often timid in development of his insights, and quite often baulks at following up points he has himself raised. C Day-Lewis's story reveals yet again the extraordinary cohesiveness and surface tolerance of English middle- and upper-class society, the powerful amiability of its intercourse which is at once stifling and appealing, destructive and inspiritingly humane.

The paradoxical positions Day-Lewis often occupied illustrate the perils of its inclusiveness well: espousing Communism and working for the Party while teaching at reactionary, philistine and shibboleth-ridden preparatory schools; writing accomplished but self-congratulatory and stupefyingly middle-class detective stories alongside poems which spoke of the need for a mystic leader, for the dawn of a new era; chatting pleasantly to the villagers in his local while imagining he was embracing the proletariat. The absurdities of these situations reflect not so much on Day-Lewis (though they do do this) as on a country where such ingenuousness and self-deception were/are possible. Day-Lewis did not, unlike his fellow-poets, travel during the Thirties and the civilised, cultivated quietism of so much of English life scarcely was conducive to either breadth or depth of vision.

It is of course admirable that the English are able to put aside ideology and confront the individual *qua* individual, and English literary life emerges from a book such as this as infinitely more beneficent and attractive than its American or French counterparts: Auden returns from his self-imposed war-exile to be treated with affection and respect, Day-Lewis and Kingsley Amis find that their political and literary differences can recede when in one another's company. But all this is achieved at a cost: English cultural life has a terrifying tendency to treat every principle, every vision, from neo-Jansenism to Stalinism, merely as interesting idiosyncrasies, and dissolves them in a social agreeability elevated to morality.

Of course out of these difficulties of English life great art has been made – we have the works of Forster, Lawrence, Owen, Spender, Angus Wilson, Iris Murdoch. Day-Lewis does not belong to their company. His resolutions of tensions are too easily made; the pragmatic, quietist outcome was really a foregone conclusion all the time. And his language not merely reveals this, but shows it forth for all to realise. Those strident clarion-calls of the early verse, with their borrowings of idiom and image from Auden, often curiously juxtaposed with lines full of Georgian inversions and pastoral quaintnesses of diction, could never, I feel, have been made by one who believed, in those creative parts of his being, in the struggle and transformation he was appealing for; they are, rather, the platitudes of self-conscious, and ultimately self-satisfied dream in which reaction lies dormant.

Though in his later years Day-Lewis felt himself increasingly drawn to the Ireland of his birth and ancestry, he was also increasingly mindful of himself as belonging to a firm English tradition – contemplative, lyrical, civilised, humanitarian, restrained. His hero was Hardy, and indeed he now lies buried in Stinsford Churchyard 'close beside Hardy's heart'. The sanctification of Hardy, in which Day-Lewis played a considerable part, is something of which I have come to have an extreme distrust, and Day-Lewis's story only confirms me in this. Meditative resignation, controlled pessimism, wistful awareness of life's double skein of pain and beauty, these are all very well, but men bleed, burn, rage, rejoice, love and howl, and language *must* be found for these emotions as dynamics. To see all experience in the sad, gentle light of transience, *sub specie aeternitatis*, is not only spiritually patronising and reducing, it is, I suggest, somewhat dangerous.

Alan Hollinghurst

Mon Bon

You have taken your noise away
and left me again with the electric
hummers and talkers, composing myself
all morning in opal bathwater
with the door open onto empty rooms.

I look for friends in the street.
A boy turns on a bike, calling me
by another name, the reflex of a life
which is not mine and never will be.
You will come back but one day go
for ever.

The flooded fields forget, forget,
and in the wind a wheeling maple-leaf
comes tittuping on the path behind me
making me think it is you fooling,
repenting the experiment of absence.

I should have passed the evenings
drawing you.
Now my last sight of you fades
to a moving glow: the less and less
I can recall is your dream-portrait,
the fickle artefact of memory.

But you are there still, the other
you, 'Mon Bon', genie of the desk
and friend beneath the skin, back
where I want you when I am alone.
You will not go till I go.

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Helen McNeil

Old Game, New Guise

The Culture of Narcissism by CHRISTOPHER LASCH *W. W. Norton* £6.95

The Culture of Narcissism is an impassioned attack upon the decadence of contemporary American society, but by a process which is less ironic than may at first appear, that very culture has instantly, even gratefully, swallowed Lasch's book whole and, I fear, without trace. Lasch's articulate lament for America's loss of the historical sense was a best-seller. It appealed to the same American public which, a year later, has been buying *The Complete Scarsdale Medical Diet, How to Prosper During the Coming Bad Years, Restoring the American Dream, Mary Ellen's Best of Helpful Hints* and a parody of same, *Aunt Erma's Cope Book* (my source is a recent *Washington Post* Book World).

According to Lasch, present-day America 'has carried the logic of individualism to the extreme of a war of all against all, the pursuit of happiness to the dead end of a narcissistic preoccupation with the self'. For conservatives Lasch's mainly non-economic, non-ideological observations lend weight to the hope that present ills are due to the attitude of malingerers. For members of what Tom Wolfe has called 'the "Me" generation' even Lasch's no-exit pessimism merits serious attention, since it is after all about oneself. The success of Lasch's book is a symptom of the disease it analyses.

The introductory overview of *The Culture of Narcissism* is full of deliberate half-truths aimed at rousing audience fears:

> Defeat in Vietnam, economic stagnation, and the impending exhaustion of natural resources have produced a mood of pessimism in higher circles, which spreads through the rest of society as people lose faith in their leaders. . . . In Europe, the growing strength of communist parties, the revival of fascist movements, and a wave of terrorism all testify, in different ways, to the weakness of established regimes and to the exhaustion of established tradition.

Things fall apart – and then they get really scary. Later, however, Lasch remarks cogently that disillusion with establishment politics is a sign of increased public awareness. He also says later that the war of all against all has spread upwards from the very poor, where it has always prevailed, but no matter, the tone is what counts. On tone, note 'higher circles' for American bureaucrats, 'regimes' for (undiscussed) European governments.

In a sense Lasch has written two books, one the scare book about decline and fall, and the other the historical study which underlies the pessimism. Often the jeremiad distorts the facts, an effect which is particularly ominous in Lasch's own field, the recent history of radicalism and reform in politics and education.

By concentrating on white middle-class youth revolt, Lasch continues the argument of his *The Agony of the American Left* (1970), in which he argued that American radicalism, ideologically naive, corrupted by the media, and lacking a secure class base, was doomed to fail.

In education too, 'radicalism unwittingly echoes the conservatism which assumes that common people cannot hope to master the art of reasoning or achieve clarity of expression'. The effort to democratise education has not only failed to right inequality, 'it has contributed to the decline of critical thought and the erosion of intellectual standards'. This argument, which has nothing to do with narcissism, sounds like the gleeful chorus of 'I told you so' which greeted the 1972 publication *Inequality* by Christopher Jencks and others (not discussed by Lasch). Jencks's research showed that American education appeared to have no long term effect in achieving economic or social equality. Yet, as Jencks argued, this wasn't the fault of the education (students in enriched programmes surged ahead as long as they were kept in this positive atmosphere). It happened because a few crumbs for education had been used to quiet demands for much more expensive and controversial reforms of social structure. Lasch never puts his anti-liberal criticisms into this kind of perspective, though he does undercut his 'new illiteracy' argument by admitting that there would have been an educational crisis anyway, since new technology makes most jobs boring, yet requires expertise which most people can't achieve.

Since narcissism is a personality disorder originating in infant fears of loss of affection, the sections of *The Culture of Narcissism* about marriage (or, rather, divorce), the family, and the exile of the aged are the most convincing and indeed moving. In American society, where 40% of this year's marriages are due to end in divorce, childhood insecurity must almost inevitably lead to the classic narcissistic minimising of emotional risks. The secondary narcissist's emotional shallowness protects him from loss and rage at imagined loss, while it prevents him from 'reliving happy experiences or treasuring them in memory'.

Lasch stresses the political price of the lost personal past. The child who is so wounded can never participate in that traditional communal delusion by which we behave as if we were not separate beings, but bear the values of our parents, the welfare of our comrades, and the inheritance of our children.

On the large scale, Lasch's psychological analysis of society is actually the old game of national character. One might as easily say that Americans suffer from having unreal goals, a nation of Gatsbys with acne. Or that the dangerous new element is hedonism, which is certainly an apt response to 'diminishing expectations' in the public sphere.But as Marcuse said, pleasure threatens capitalism – unless it can be sold. Much contemporary mass-media American advertising depicts a world of sexual and psychic energy and enjoyment, the laid and the 'laid-back', with the product nestled somewhere in the image. Meanwhile élite advertising and most non-fiction best-sellers occupy the ground between failure to cope and terror in the face of death. In the *New Yorker,* you can send for a 'golden hand-polished brass' bracelet engraved with the motto 'DAMN I'M GOOD', useful for readers who have reason to believe they're damned useless. Or the middle-aged man, carefully illustrated, can fret in an informed manner about his cancer growth potential by subscribing to the *Harvard Medical School Medical Review*. Add your own anecdotes. This is a culture in which those who already have power – the managerial and technical upper middle classes – keep themselves going by jolting themselves with doses of tension and fear of failure, just as they have done for hundreds of years in a tradition of Protestant ethic which has always assumed an absence at the centre and an alienation from others.

Charles Tomlinson

Hay

The air at evening thickens with a scent
That walls exude and dreams turn lavish on –
Dark incense of a solar sacrament
Where, laid in swathes, the field-silk dulls
and dries
To contour out the land's declivities
With parallels of grass, sweet avenues:
Scent hangs perpetual above the changes,
As when the hay is turned and we must lose
This clarity of sweeps and terraces
Until the bales space out the slopes again
Like scattered megaliths. Each year the men
Pile them up close before they build the stack,
Leaving against the sky, as night comes on,
A henge of hay-bales to confuse the track
Of time, and out of which the smoking dews
Draw odours solid as the huge deception.

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Andrew Motion

From the Imperial

I

What I tell myself is this:
I have flown three hours
and found an obscure room
to make you remote at last.
On the warm balcony

staring at harbour lights,
I almost believe their newness
could extinguish history.
A quay of yachts appears,
masts, and that reflection

is my window, always held
unsteady as it topples
down from wave to wave.
Does my face survive there,
while around it outlines

of the whole Imperial
collapse and join again?
Everything below is broken
black and ochre, shifting
as it will no matter how

I watch or turn away,
and leaving nothing clear
except your distant voice,
rephrasing cadences of loss
for me to share continually.

II

Now I am almost asleep
who are these other voices,
these dream companions
dead a century ago?
Beneath my room I hear

their gentle ancient talk,
imagining a frigate moored
inside the harbour wall,
while shawls pull close,
and couples calmly stroll

indoors to linen sheets.
Loyalists. Imperialists.
I see you ghosting arm
in arm through olives
hung with yellow lamps,

until you disappear again
with open empty hands
raised to say good-night,
your gloves a final brilliance
waved against the shore.

III

There is one I know
– Edward Lear, lonely
and bigongulous, wishing
he were an egg. I watch
him climbing dark stairs

towards a room like this,
and drawing shutters tight
on moonlight fallen
jiggy-jaggy in the bay.
Such fragrant darknesses.

Such secrecy. From year
to year he keeps himself
without a word for love,
and then sails north
at last, his boat weighed

down with chairs, tables,
and an upright black piano
strapped and locked on deck,
the varnish quickly warming
as it flashes back the sun.

IV

Awake at first light,
I see Kerkyra town emerge
through thin mist. Squares
are dark with trees, lamps
diminish, and on the faint

Albanian coast sudden
explosions of dust settle
and rise again. Where
is my future in this?
Already your voice starts

calling me home, saying
here is the past regarding
itself for ever, while we
. . . But there are the boats
skirting that harbour wall,

and then in the distance
a jet, climbing once more
through pale unsteady air,
its travellers gazing perhaps
at arcs of sand, monasteries,

even this prosperous street.
I watch invisibly, turning
away as traffic begins,
and blinds unrolling from shops
spread their secluding white.

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Warring Fictions

A Gentle Occupation by DIRK BOGARDE *Chatto* £5.95
The Missing Years by WALTER LAQUEUR *Weidenfeld* £5.95
The Loser and **Frontiers of the Sea** by PETER USTINOV *Heinemann* £5.95 each
Birthstone by D.M. THOMAS *Gollancz* £6.50

With his first novel, Dirk Bogarde accepts the challenge issued by more than one admirer of his excellent autobiographies, *A Postillion Struck by Lightning* and *Snakes and Ladders*, and acquits himself with much honour. *A Gentle Occupation* is set on an imaginary island between Borneo and Java, where a force of British and Indian soldiers oversee the repatriation of Dutch prisoners of war and try to impose some sort of peace on a people stunned by life under the Japanese and impatient for liberation. The Dutch and Japanese occupations of the island have left a legacy of old betrayals, cruelty and lost love; these form the mainspring of the book. Sensitive, attractive Captain Benjamin Rooke is a conscript and an actor who in quiet moments dreams about his boyhood and his dear old Nanny Jarvis, and wishes he could go home now that the pukka war is over. However, he has been sent to the island where he must watch the settling of old scores and the struggle between principle and self-interest, and slowly he becomes an actor in the drama himself.

Here, death is always present – as memory, threat and reality – and the book does not stint on blood and pain. Sometimes, however, these deaths seem too useful to the author, as if they were necessary for the demands of the plot, rather than contingent on it. A sense of waste there certainly is, but the vicious randomness of the stray bullet or the wandering bacillus is missing. Killing off characters *does* clear up loose ends, and a complex plot produces these as readily as a pregnant rabbit babies, but who approves of myxomatosis?

As in the autobiographies, Dirk Bogarde shines in his dialogue and characterisation: Major Nettles enjoys army life for the opportunity it gives him to ogle young men in their regulation shorts; Emmie, the Dutch girl, wonders who the English playwright Noah Howard is; Nanni Singh quotes biblical saws in the Residency kitchen; Major Pullen thinks it's all a bit of a rumble-bumble. These, and others, are wonderful, funny, live people and, as in life, none is either altogether good or bad. They more than redeem this overplotted but nonetheless considerable novel.

Another good first novel by an established writer is *The Missing Years*, by Walter Laqueur, the modern historian and editor. Richard Lasson, a German Jew, now a successful doctor in New York, is pressed by his children into writing his autobiography. He asks for advice from a novelist friend who replies, 'Tell in your own words what you saw, simply, artlessly, do not psychologize, be yourself, do not be self-conscious . . . Don't worry, your story will not be too subjective'. Lasson – and Laqueur – obey these wise words, and the result is a magnificent evocation of life as a Jew in Germany during the first half of this century.

Often the account *is* artless, but the reader ascribes any *gaucheries* to the man Lasson, not to the novelist Laqueur. What emerges is an honest view of Germany during the career of Hitler, the gradual hardening of anti-semitic attitudes, how the Jews reacted, and the influence of fear, courage and love upon a family. The eponymous missing years are those lost from life during the war, and they climax in a journey, which loses nothing in credibility as it gains in tension.

The book is an example of what should be the best form of 'faction': not fact which is given the veneer of fiction, but fiction which is as utterly convincing as fact. Lasson on the last page reflects '. . . it seems to me most unlikely that those who were not there will ever understand'. Perhaps not, but with the help of Walter Laqueur, we can believe that we understand. To close the novel is to leave a friend.

Heinemann, inspired by the great popular success of his autobiography, *Dear Me*, haven't yet persuaded Peter Ustinov to produce a new book, but their re-issue of two of his works from the Sixties is perhaps the next best thing.

The Loser, a novel, and *Frontiers of the Sea*, a collection of short stories, are both still available from Granada paperbacks, but in hardcover they deserve reinstatement on the library shelves.

The Loser is a finely-drawn psychological study of a young German soldier, prefabricated for war, who loses everything, even the ability to come to terms with his own brutality. This compassionate novel avoids the visibly contrived twists and dying falls that mar many of the short stories, which remain withal quirky, well-written, and full of the Ustinov sparkle.

Birthstone. Far from the ebb and flow of battle, deep in eldritch Cornwall, Jo, who sometimes feels she's Joe, accompanies old Lola and younger Hector through a hole in a stone. Slowly Hector grows older and Lola younger, and the lighthouse-keeper joins in, and everyone has sex and dreams and problems.

Around this unpromising hokum, D.M. Thomas weaves a tale full of symbolic and lyrical poetry – he is, after all, primarily a poet – leaving room for a weft of wry humour and a woof of humanity to adorn the fantasy. Speech and description, particularly of Cornwall, that oddest of English counties, are handled in a clear and fluent style, which is less than complemented by the book's repellent jacket. On the whole a disappointing follow-up to the author's acclaimed *Flute-Player*.

NEXT WEEK
Michael Mewshaw on Graham Greene; Brian Harrison on Association Football; Andrew Motion on new poetry.

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Spring and Summer Books

The books listed below are a selection from those which the publishers hope to issue between now and mid-September. Some prices are provisional, some are not yet known.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Wiener Blut

MICHAEL KUSTOW reports from New York

The lifts of New York's Juilliard School, the most respected performing arts academy in the world, carry fascinating passengers. Nymphs in shin-warmers and leotards, serious bespectacled violinists from Korea. A black actor running through a climactic tirade against Whitey, a double-bass case behind which voices discuss dotted quavers. I'm here doing a workshop with Juilliard's final-year acting students, and my daily travels through the building are themselves theatre. In lounges and corridors, an international congregation of apprentice dancers, singers, actors, instrumentalists sprawl together, happily exhausted. One comes almost to expect to rehearse scenes with an orchestra playing Beethoven or Samuel Barber next door. But who is Juilliard's secret jazzman, the late-night vibraphonist practising dissident Milt Jackson riffs and runs?

Michael Langham, the expatriate British director who ran the Tyrone Guthrie theatre in Minneapolis and now directs Juilliard's drama division, invited me to work with his students on *Reigen* (Merrygoround), Arthur Schnitzler's sequence of mating dances between the men and women of Vienna 1900. 'It'll be good for them to work on a really European play, and you can teach them a bit about Freud and Klimt and Mahler.' New York when I arrive, it turns out, is suffering Vienna-saturation. The Metropolitan Museum is showing costumes of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, whose extravagance says everything about the parade and pretensions of that grandiose society, and they're also screening Michael Frayn's witty BBC film about illusion and reality in Viennese art, architecture and philosophy. Max Ophuls' film *La Ronde*, a knowing French image of Schnitzler with Gérard Philipe in one of his most seductive roles, is playing the revival-houses. And the book-reviewers are praising Carl Schorske's new *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna: Politics and Culture*.

Schorske, a distinguished Princeton intellectual historian, traces America's fascination with terminal Imperial Vienna back to the post-war decline of political and historical optimism, triggered by the Cold War, McCarthyism, Stalinism. Freud's sombre psycho-history struck responsive American chords, Klimt, Schiele and Kokoschka, 'Vienna's painters of the sensuous and psychic life, leapt from obscurity to what can only be called a vogue,' and 1968 Berkeley students wore badges proclaiming MAHLER GROOVES. The thread that links Schorske's studies of playwriting, poetry, town-planning, psychoanalysis and music, the key to the astonishing modernist transformation of so many different arts and cultural phenomena, is a political one: the crisis of liberalism.

'The new culture-makers in the city of Freud,' writes Schorske, 'repeatedly defined themselves in terms of a kind of collective oedipal revolt. Yet the young were revolting not so much against their fathers as against the authority of the paternal culture that was their inheritance. What they assaulted on a broad front was the system of classical liberalism-in-ascendancy within which they had been reared.' The analogy with recent American experience, not only in the rebellion of counter-culture but in the hedonism of bourgeois life, is inescapable. Between Woody Allen's Manhattan and Schnitzler's Vienna there are striking resemblances: narcissistic cultivation of the private and personal growing out of disillusionment with the public; an explosion of cultural modernism in cities that remain rootedly 19th-century; sexual curiosity; an ethnic mixture, a prevalent Jewishness; a compact élite of art, fashion, ideas and money which gives each city the quality of a metropolitan village.

My students at Juilliard were not especially aware of these cultural echoes; like aspiring actors anywhere, their curiosity outside class was focused on examples and models of their own craft. But our fortnight's exploration of Schnitzler gave me some instructive insights into both the overlays and differences between American and European approaches to feelings, eroticism, language and acting.

Schnitzler writes about men and women with teasing subtlety. In the most intricate sexual-social encounters of *Reigen*, it's almost impossible to disentangle sincerity from play-acting, pretence from need, tactic from truth. The riddling mirror-world of eroticism plays into the volatile make-believe of theatricality, which is why *Reigen* is such a captivating play. Performance, in both the sexual and theatrical sense, becomes ambiguous, mysterious, something which can be understood only when acted.

My students, trained to seek Stanislavskian 'objectives' and 'intentions', had the basic equipment to enter the Schnitzlerian labyrinth, and their classical training in textual sensitivity should have prepared them for the language and social demarcations in Schnitzler's dialogue. But we soon ran into our first intriguing problem. Instilled into American playwriting and theatre is the idea that somewhere beneath the web of illusion and pretence a basic Truth is to be found. This idea, puritan in its simplicity, lies behind O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, even quizzical Albee. It also forms the basis of most modern American acting. Sooner or later, even the most mysterious American performance, with its attendant oddity, forceful personal signature, and often arrestingly oblique behaviour and speech, seems to settle on to some trustworthy plane of the Truth, which is the key to everything else. He is a megalomaniac. She is a political militant. She is emotionally hurt beneath the wisecracks. He is a saint. The actor's craft, after a turbulent crossing, comes home to harbour, and a character is born. Brando, Jane Fonda, Diane Keaton, Jack Nicholson in their different ways all say: there is a way out of the labyrinth, an answer to the riddle, a reassuring label to the mystery.

When this assumption of acting is applied to Schnitzler, it works only partially – to reveal, for example, simple lust or rank hypocrisy. But at the heart of Schnitzler's vision of human desire is a quizzical, shifting, deliquescent reality which can never be pinned down as the final Truth, and once glimpsed, this had my students shaking their heads in wonderment: 'Wow, it's such a weird, different world.'

Another area of cultural divergence was sexual behaviour. Each of Schnitzler's couples flirt, make love and return to post-coital reality. Here again significant stereotypes lay in wait. Pre-permissive American drama bequeathed torrid romanticism or deodorised pertness, post-permissiveness has given us characters who talk dirty, copulate commercially, or, in experimental theatre, group-grope organically, acting out ideas of instinctual liberation which Marcuse and Norman O. Brown have formulated. In order to approach the comic and realistic sexuality of Schnitzler's Viennese, we had to discard a whole range of contemporary attitudes: Doris Day cuteness, a plastic version of innocence; post-*Oh Calcutta* knowingness, a comic-strip of decadent sexuality; and an all-purpose wham-bam-thankyou-mam familiarity with the body and its permutations. Schnitzler's eroticism requires distance and decorum if its comedy and poetry are to surface; we managed at least to glimpse how physical restraint and the poise of humour might temper the demonstrative sexual behaviour which was all too readily at hand as a stage convention.

The imagination of the American theatre does not easily filter subterranean sexual desire through language. (Perhaps this is why Pinter's oblique *Betrayal*, performed by an American cast, is currently spellbinding Broadway audiences; Pinter can be very Schnitzlerian, especially in those veiled encounters of his when libido seems to spill unbidden into speech.) This relation of words to authenticity was the final way in which my young Juilliard actors started from a different position from their English or European counterparts. 'American actors think if they're inarticulate they're being truthful,' Michael Langham warned me, and although this misconception is less apparent among classically-based Juilliard graduates, its prevalence elsewhere in the American theatre does point to another important difference.

Traditional English acting elevated music and style above meaning, and although the past two decades with their proletarian, regional and ethnic naturalisms have subverted this tradition, it persists. Language for English actors is not just a medium, it's equally a message, a material with substance and form that must be cherished and kept in good order. New York speech is such a clatter of ethnic usage, neologism, sanitised jargon, elaborate overkill and sheer noise that it's probably too unstable for American actors to use in this way. But without alertness to language, much of the delicious game-playing quality of Schnitzlerian sexuality is lost. It cannot be replaced by pre-verbal emotional recall. I found myself prodding some of the actors to think, feel and speak simultaneously. If the typical vice of an English actor is formalism, that of his American counterpart is an emotionalism that is private, speechless and slow.

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I've necessarily sharpened and dramatised certain tendencies I felt during a fortnight's engrossing work, which like all theatre processes, was largely intuitive. I hugely enjoyed and learned from my students' openness, appetite and flexibility, and I think they learned something about Schnitzler's complex chameleon comedy. My wishes go with them when they step from the enchanted elevators of Juilliard into the American entertainment apparatus.

Theatre – 1

Benedict Nightingale

Back in Time

Before the Party by RODNEY ACKLAND *Queens*
Reflections by JOHN PEACOCK *Haymarket*
An Optimistic Thrust *Young Vic*

Last week the clocks went on, and the drama moved sedately backwards. For what one hopes was a mere parsec in theatrical time, some of us had a sense of what it was like to be the keen-eyed young Kenneth Tynan circa 1950. There he was, moaning that there was nothing in his bailiwick 'one dares discuss with an intelligent man for more than five minutes' and wailing that the inhabitants of the drama he was obliged to review all belonged 'to a social class derived partly from romantic novels and partly from the playwright's vision of the leisured life he will lead after the play is a success'. Here were we, briefly sharing the numbness that must so often have afflicted his mind and rump.

To be sure, *Before the Party* has an excuse *Reflections* cannot offer. It was actually written in 1949, and may even have seemed a mite rebellious by the standards of those times. The subject is English hypocrisy as smugly practised by a Surrey family whose grouchy patriarch is hoping to be adopted as Tory candidate for the local parliamentary constituency. When Cook, who has Nazi sympathies, locks the kitchenmaid into the cupboard for being part-Jewish, his chauvinism momentarily triumphs over his anti-semitism, and she is sacked: a decision speedily reversed when it's realised that the bishop is coming to dinner. When daughter Laura lets slip that she has slit the throat of the drunken colonial the family foisted on her as husband, and proposes to marry a young man it regards as an idler and lout, she becomes a social embarrassment too severe to be tolerated. The discovery that the wastrel is actually heir to a title and fortune brings about yet another dizzying moral somersault. The play ends with the lovers sneaking off to healthier climes beyond, leaving the baby of the family, who has been persistently lied to and lectured for lying herself to muse balefully on the infinite corruption of adults: a conclusion regarded, it's said, as excessively cynical by Somerset Maugham, who wrote the short story upon which the play was based.

Rodney Ackland, though probably best known as the author of *The Old Ladies*, has written stuff more worth reviving than either that or this, prime among it his pre-war Chekhovian memoir *The Dark River*. Tom Conti's production makes no attempt to pretend that *Before the Party* hasn't dated – note the quaint references to whisky at 17s 6d, black-market petrol and gourmet spam – but dated it nevertheless has. The trouble is not so much the technique, though the cast seems to find an improbable number of thin excuses for cramming itself into Laura's bedroom, and Jane Asher, who plays her with a kind of steely fragility, has trouble making us credit lines like 'I hated him because I'd just discovered I loved him from the bottom of my heart'. No, the problem rather is that the relative originality of presenting us with a heroine who is also a murderess, and a rather more sympathetic one than that of Maugham's own *Letter*, is insufficient to compensate for attitudes and conflicts that seem painfully of their period.

Rebellion turns out to be marrying an unpretentious lordling. Alcoholism, even to the understanding Laura, is a culpable weakness of will. The murder itself was clearly an uncalculated aberration, classifiable at worst as manslaughter committed while of unsound mind. More importantly, the play is battling against social foibles which, if not yet eradicated, certainly take subtler and more insidious forms than in 1949. Even then, these middle-class monsters must have seemed extreme, the satire directed at them crude; and those members of the audience who might have been manoeuvred into identifying with them would readily have been able to dissociate themselves from such shameless extravagance. It would, no doubt, be too much to claim that the play mounts the kind of attack on complacency that encourages complacency; but its bark is considerably worse than its bite.

Reflections is nominally a new play, and actually what used to be called a 'star vehicle', meaning something propelled by high-octane names rather than any power source within. Dorothy Tutin, all fluttering vowels and butterfly charisma, is Madame du Barry, and Donald Pleasence, all bunched menace and silky malignity, the unlikely English revolutionary who has annexed her house and estate in hopes of finding treasure hidden therein. There is a nice ironic ending, though one visible from some little way off; but up to that point it all seems very Haymarket, from the grandiose set to the swaggering lines and feathery conflicts. I'll long remember Miss Tutin beside her hundred-yard-high windows, elegantly gasping at the sight of her private zoo in flames, only to be interrupted by the fistula-faced Pleasence, who hisses 'the terror is here, Madame'.

It would have seemed thin stuff even when the vogue for the costume plays of Fry and Cocteau was at its height. Something is supposedly being said about mirrors, reflections, shared identities and so on; but, like the characterisation, it dissolves into a wispy mist as soon as one grasps it. The only thoughts successfully transmitted across the footlights are depressingly familiar: that the zealotry of the left is psychologically suspect, in this case largely a blend of envy and lust, and that the old order deserves sympathy not censure, in this case because it has been nice to its hirelings and serfs. It may sometimes be true. It may even have been true of du Barry and her bug-eyed persecutor. But it isn't much to take out into the cutting spring air of Britain 1980.

An Optimistic Thrust should be trebly welcome this week, because it's about shedding dead ideas and beliefs, 'ghosts'. Extracts from *Great Expectations*, including the one where Pip announces his intention to become a 'gentleman', are cut into improvised scenes burlesquing education, the family, the roles imposed on women. The group responsible is possibly the best on the 'fringe', Joint Stock, and its director the admirable William Gaskill; but the result says more for their good intentions than their native inventiveness. It is very, very dull: proof, if such be needed, that there's more than one way to paralyse intellect and bum.

Theatre – 2

Paul Allen

Constabular Campery

The Summer Party by STEPHEN POLIAKOFF *Crucible Theatre, Sheffield*

The dramatic climax of Stephen Poliakoff's latest and largest theatre play comes as the crowd begins to get justifiably ugly at an open air music festival where the big act has failed to turn up, the laser show doesn't work and a boy magician has been exposed as a fake. With one knifing reported and the night literally at its darkest the local Chief Constable climbs the stage and promises the customers something they have never seen before: 'The sunrise coming up – and a chance to take a really good look at yourselves'.

Pretend for the moment if you can that instead of starting the revolution there and then the crowd finds its anger washed away by this improbable piece of constabular campery; because the point of the play follows in a short flurry of dialogue, the play's coda. The butterfly wife (Hayley Mills) of the show's promoter tells the policeman: 'I'm a little afraid of you, but it's rather a nice feeling.' The elegantly tetchy promoter himself (Alan Rickman) tells him he should go into politics. And the child magician (an enchantingly obnoxious performance by Dexter Fletcher) awards the supreme accolade: 'You could be a star.' But there is one more character to have her say: a woman fan (Patti Love) who has been detained all night waiting to be charged with possessing drugs and assaulting a policeman.

We believe the charges to be false, but the Chief Constable now offers to let her go if she will oblige him by apologising. Her refusal despatches her at last to the farm doubling as an incident room, but at least she answers the question of how far you go to satisfy the ego of Superfuzz, and in doing so she makes Poliakoff's point that there is such a question to answer.

The Summer Party is a play with a worthy, even honourable theme but the narrative is unlikely in outline and thinly unconvincing in execution. It has a first act of positively Chekhovian languor without Poliakoff's usual masterly suggestion of violence temporarily suppressed. This is (presumably) the result

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not of any attempt to rewrite *The Seagull* but of the need to edge a narrative way round the abyss he has set between himself and his final thrust by making popular showbiz the policeman's route to stardom. I refuse to suggest that the man's surname, Kramer, is a sort of anagram of Sir Robert Mark's, but when we did get somewhere near a superstar policeman it was through the usual manipulation of the instruments of politics, committees and television: not a set on a Rolling Stones bill.

Showbiz makes an initially appealing background to the narrative, not least because Poliakoff writes piercingly about the details of getting such a show on, especially the impossible demands which the real performers make to cover the fact that they can bear less and less to do their awful jobs. But I imagine he chose it more because of the freedom it offers to write lines about 'what people want', a phrase used in at least three different ways with Kramer apparently having the final word unless you count the uniquely alienated woman fan.

I might have believed the play if Kramer himself had been a more persuasive character. But all we know about him is his tendency to catnap in the official car while prowling round his patch at night, presumably looking for vacant stages, and an ironic lack of insight into his own behaviour: he is an individualist who has turned his own daughter into an automaton, and condemns bad manners in a style only a real boor can master. But his words are banal, his opinions dull and most of his advice is misguided. Perhaps it isn't surprising that Brian Cox's performance is so lifeless and that the best performance comes from Roger Lloyd Pack's flat, suburban, tired, good-natured, ageing star who 'can't even understand the graffiti in the toilet at the Rainbow' nowadays and will retire when the 11-bedroomed house in Dorset is paid for.

Technically the show is terrific; no theatre or director (Peter James) lavishes more care and attention on new work, as I am gratefully aware. But was this play chosen because it had commercial backing? Mrs Thatcher will be pleased.

David Sweetman

Insight

A blindman sits for his portrait:
eyes the colour of troubled waters
he finds no shore and his hand
comforts only an imaginary child.

Watching him carefully, the painter
fences with insanely coloured guano
until, tired of vision, he gently sets
his wooden heart upon a table.

Winter elms are the nervous system
of the sky but the artist sees only
the window's mollusc trails. Yet,
behind drawn curtains, the sitter

can see fire glowing in his veins
can lovingly rub his eyes
till galaxies of colours come
in search of which all artists fail.

Another day he will touch his image,
feel blizzards of paint, hard
as braille typed by jailed murderers
bringing Milton to sightless souls.

Television

Julian Barnes

Sugar-Coating the Frog

Zola did well by Equity. Most of his well-populated novels translate fluently into TV, film or stage form (it can't be long before we get *Nana, Nanette*); and, though foreign, his name on a telly serial doesn't provoke that quick-down-the-pub response which, say, a new eight-parter from Knut Hamsun might do. But *Thérèse Raquin*? It's Zola at his most mechanistic and determinist, most rigidly under the spell of Taine's dictum that vice and virtue are chemical products like sugar and vitriol. The novel's tense, dwelling, internal elaboration of the state of nerves and passions of the main characters doesn't transfer easily into television's external terms; and the dialogue count of the original is very low. Maybe the adaptor Philip Mackie might have taken pause if he'd looked up the fortune of Zola's own stage version of the book: it ran for only five days.

I shouldn't think audiences will fall off in the three evenings of Mackie's *Raquin* (BBC-2): there are enough Kate Nelligan fans around to see to that (did they, I wonder, rise as one man from their viewing couches and hiss when Laurent, Thérèse's artist-peasant lover, remarks slightingly, 'She's not beautiful; she's attractive, I suppose'?). But, without a voiceover, even Ms Nelligan's kaleidoscopically expressive face is inadequate to convey the churning inner life which the book unfolds; and the effect of this is to simplify Zola, to make it seem as if Thérèse and Laurent murder Camille only for the externally visible reasons – because the husband is feeble in bed and because those tacky *jeudis* are incredibly boring. Without access to the violent, disordered drives of the lovers, it's hard so far to see the story as anything approaching the modern tragedy Zola intended.

The acting is excellent, particularly Kenneth Cranham's whiningly indulged Camille; but the production is variable. It's always difficult establishing the boringness of a milieu: playing dreary string music half-obliteratingly over the top of dreary conversation is over-productive. The French accents slip around like bad false teeth; and there was an awful moment when a bankside quartet of adolescent girls just happened to be surprised dancing round singing 'Auprès de ma blonde' in ripe English tones. But the murder, awkward, panicky and guilt-ridden, came across as the most authentic-looking killing I've seen since that long-drawn-out gas-oven job in Hitchcock's *Torn Curtain*; and the sex was nice, brutish and long – with exactly the 'caresses fauves' and 'franchise énergique' that Zola describes. Probably only rugby fans would have been unsettled, as I was, by Brian Cox's strange similarity to Roger Uttley, the England flank forward. It was a visual coincidence which made his and Ms Nelligan's bedroom activities sometimes seem rather more like rucking than, well, its rhyme-word.

I wonder if *Thérèse Raquin* was being monitored by those research students who have been dutifully logging infringements of NVLA principles (they spotted over 1,100 such offences in the previous week); if so, their biros must have overheated. Their patroness Mary Whitehouse featured this week on *The Controversialists* (BBC-1), where she surprised this viewer for one by revealing that there is a 'humanist-gay lobby' in this country. Did you know that? Mrs Whitehouse mentioned it as casually as she'd mention a copy of the *Radio Times*, so I suppose it must be true, as must her account of its activities: 'the gay lobby... go into schools and say to young people who are going through that [adolescent] turmoil that they are Glad to be Gay.' Lock up your sons, O readers. For her part, representing as she did the hetero-Christian lobby, Mrs Whitehouse put up a sympathetic performance, though she was greatly aided in this by interviewer Trevor Beeson, a mufti vicar who only really came out of his corner to challenge her on homosexuality. He failed to pick her up when she had cart and horse trouble (as in objecting that 'premarital sex was being made normal on television'), and for the most part he passively accepted her arguments against her unholy trinity of 'Disbelief, Doubt and Dirt'. Now that's a fine banner, if ever I heard one, for liberalism to ride out under.

This column, by the way, is wearing a black armband this week for Jay Silverheels, the one and only Tonto from *The Lone Ranger*. *The Face Behind the Face* (BBC-2) might have been a documentary about Tonto's masked companion, but turned out to be about Shostakovich. (Spot the connection, though: in his 15th Symphony, Shostakovich parodically incorporates the famous theme tune to which Tonto and the Ranger once rode into view over that mound of scrub). *Face* had some hypnotic playing of Shostakovich's quartets, some revealing footage of the elderly composer looking at his most stricken and paranoid, and a self-indulgently defeated approach to its subject. This started with the Pirandello-style subtitle, 'A search for a portrait of Dmitri Shostakovich'. Of course, it's far from straightforward producing a biography (in any medium) of a Soviet artist who struggled as this one did to retain his integrity while constantly being tempted by the blandishments of that ubiquitous Soviet figure Kompromis Kompromisovich. But there are ways.

A typical Shostakovich 'problem', 'enigma', etc, concerns the 8th Quartet, which the composer officially declared to be 'about' Fascism and the war, but more recently maintained (in the disputed *Testimony*) to be purely autobiographical and self-referring. And that – after a ludic montage-job – was where the programme happily dumped it, still a frightful enigma. But why wasn't there a discussion of the authenticity of *Testimony*? Why wasn't there evidence from people who knew Shostakovich, or at least knew his work? Artistic 'problems', simply by being artistic, aren't necessarily less soluble by normal journalistic procedures. In one of several telling remarks about himself, Shostakovich observed, 'You can sugar-coat a frog and I still won't put it in my mouth'. It's a metaphor which can be aptly extended to fit the composer himself and the disguise he found necessary to make himself acceptable to his political bosses ('being

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acceptable', of course, carries the corollary of 'not being killed by'); but the makers of this documentary were too shy and reverent to take a bite.

Collectors of sports commentator ruderies who wait longingly for Ron Pickering to cry 'He's pulling out the big one' will doubtless have been monitoring Alan Weeks's performance in Dortmund. Happily, Alan didn't let Britain down, and on the big night excitedly demanded of Robin Cousins's father, 'When Robin's behind, that's when he really pulls it out, doesn't he?' Cousins *père* just had to agree. As far as I could tell, though (and I'm sure the NVLA had it logged), Robin kept it in most of the time, despite the orgasmic yelps of the young Dortmundettes every time he brought off a triple-toe Wally. Robin behaved throughout with great dignity, as if he were the only Briton in the place who didn't want Jan Hoffmann to fall on his Teutonic, burgundy-moquette bum. Alan behaved with great lack of dignity, burbling sycophantically at Robin all through the performance of the next American freeskater.

Still, Weeks's rudery wasn't the best blunder of the week; that, yet again, came from ex-President Gerald Ford on *News on Two*. 'I believe our country is in very, very deep trouble,' he began. So far so good. 'America desperately needs a new President . . . and I have determined that I can best help that cause by not being a candidate for President.' As they said of another politician, he only opens his mouth to change feet.

Films

John Coleman

Daddy's Boy

Kramer vs Kramer (A) *Odeon, Leicester Square*
Rude Boy (X) *Prince Charles*
Bhumika – the Role (A) *Paris Pullman and Phoenix from 23 March*
Murder by Decree (AA) *Warner; Scene; Studio, Oxford Circus; ABCs Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Roads*

Those of us who had traversed the public prints with an increasingly clouded eye and a pursuivant digit – such was the desperation brought on by pre-publicity overkill – had a fine surprise the other day: *Kramer vs Kramer*, written and directed by Robert Benton, is primarily funny as hell. A hell of sorts is, of course, what it toys and teases with: that cliché of our days, a broken, childed marriage and its aftermath. Here, father gets the lad. The sound of the zip as mum (Meryl Streep) packs her bags and quits after eight years of wedlock is just one of the shocks and alertnesses incorporated in this contemporary tragi-comedy of a conjugal balls-up. Dustin Hoffman, the overworking money-maker, he who gets slapped for his pains and subsequent neglect of Streep (clearly someone in his right mind would not do), has never been better as the initially bemused, growingly coping, finally Total Father – who *then* gets taken to court by the revenant missus, sorted out by some Californian shrink. This is one of the other places where Mr Benton's film is acid, accurate. What one might take a little time out to question is that old Scott Fitzgerald misquotation about the rich: the problems of these people are devalued, from where I sit, by their all-too-apparent affluence.

That said, this is a right old night-out for sentiment, with some lovely and affecting and direct dialogue treating of a serious matter. Hoffman is simply tremendous; the kid (Justin Henry) is no slouch as a juvenile; Ms Streep – who has to be an anagram for Peters – is no mess, in an extremely icky role as a none-too-motivated runaway parent. I suspect that my feelings for this film are as contaminated as anyone else's who committed his or her self to making a baby: just another sucker.

Meanwhile, back at our British film industry, there ought to be a small hurray issuing from these pages. But, in all honesty, *Rude Boy* is an even smaller splash than *A Bigger Splash*, and God knows that was a piddle. The same team – Jack Hazan and David Mingay – who did a thing around the British painter Hockney and his eerie chums – has bravely assembled a 132-minute home-movie around a very noisy group called The Clash. Rude Boy, one is a shade unclear here, could be the feller Ray Gange who is a roadie for the group, a sort of actor introduced into a sort of tell-the-way-it-is, semi-demi-documentary flash-fictional film about the way it is in the UK now – but for export. Very well, it uses our dirty talk: it effs with the best and it does take a shrewd look at areas like Soho and places like porn shops. It also expresses a deeply tedious sense of the deep tedium of the inarticulate. That is it. Except for the teddibly teddibly smart photography, which one conceives of as trying to flog something. Not that old dead horse, swinging London, again? Or swung London?

Another meanwhile . . . *Bhumika* is largely more entertaining than our (weirdly acclaimed, in some quarters) bit of fluff, but is still a drag at 140 minutes. This complaint about how long one is currently expected to sit, unsquirming, on a cinema seat is a real one, based on the fact that they do not seem to know how to cut any more – keep it short. *Bhumika*, a piece around a beautiful woman, Usha (Smita Patil), who becomes a film star – among other things, after other things – is quite splendid, not to say enthralling, when it holds itself down. It achieves this, under the excellent direction of Shyam Benegal (*Junoon*, his last accessible outing for metropolitan viewers), for around the first hour of it.

It concentrates its highest attentions on a whole series of send-ups: of the big, bad tradition of Indian song-and-dance sub-epics, where every actor and actress in work was working on at least a dozen shows at the same time. The brown camerawork about here is superb and superbly comical. Then politics enter, from the wings, staying pretty much there, but there all the same. Then, far worse, the Bombay version of Harold Robbins takes over; there is this man and that man; the lady goes through more perils; and goodnight.

Murder by Decree is enjoyable, a fully-fledged nonsense. My least favourite actor, Christopher Plummer, is here impeccable as Sherlock Holmes and my most dearly beloved thespian, James Mason, super as Watson. 1888 and Jack the Ripper's knocking off tarts among marvellously silly mists. The sets (and the rippingly uncaring location footage) go hand in mouth; or do I mean foot? I awfully suspect that this is the week's best buy. But then there are weeks like that.

Art

John Spurling

Agony and Extroverts

Arthur Boyd *Fischer Fine Art*
Terry Frost *New Art Centre*
Ruskin Spear Retrospective *Royal Academy*
Brancusi Photographs *12 Duke Street Gallery*
Japan Style *Victoria and Albert*

In the catalogue to Arthur Boyd's 1962 Retrospective at the Whitechapel, Bryan Robertson wrote of the unselfconsciousness of Australian painting, 'like Australian behaviour'. Certainly at that stage, when he had been living in England for only three years, Boyd seemed refreshingly unselfconscious in the sense Robertson meant: undaunted by the huge authority of inherited culture, free to pick up whatever images and influences he fancied – from Bosch or Breughel, Grünewald or Piero di Cosimo – and marry them to his own more modest colonial tradition of landscape-painting. Nevertheless, it was always the Gothic convention he went for – bare, forked creatures expelled from Eden, surprised in vulnerable postures beside water-holes or stumbling through thickets, their eyes large with apprehension, their bodies soft and insubstantial. If he was peopling the Australian bush with imported myths, he was also declaring that only the less classical, more primitive forms of myth had any business in Australia. No doubt this was a natural reaction to his own quietly civilised beginnings – member of an established artistic family – in the gently pastoral country round Melbourne and it was exacerbated by his strong feelings about the Second World War and his shock at first visiting the aborigine reserve near Alice Springs. In retrospect now it hardly appears at all unselfconscious, and its danger must always have been that the original excitement of juxtaposing old imagery with new scenery and reanimating both would soon evaporate, leaving merely a style.

This has never quite happened. Somehow Boyd has always continued to keep his original vision fresh, but only by narrower and narrower adjustments. Indeed it is the narrowness of the margin, the extreme self-consciousness of his skill in keeping within it, which now chiefly animates the paintings. In the early Seventies the naked, anguished figures became artists struggling in flat white landscapes under violent blue skies to commit their feelings to canvas; then in the mid-Seventies, after his return to live in the wilder landscape of New South Wales, Boyd moved on to the 'Narcissus' series, in which the original female figures drinking or washing themselves at water-holes turned into male

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figures diving into or prostrated over their own reflected images. Simultaneously the landscape grew still more simplified: horizontal bands of sky, land, water; vertical stripes of trees and sometimes a circle of rock, with the figures supplying the dynamic diagonal. Now, in his sixtieth year, Boyd has almost come back to his starting-point. The anguished figures – notably a clothed white man flogging a naked aborigine tied to a stake – have been pushed back into the middle distance while in the foreground, under a fruitful tree and beside a serene strip of water, sits a cross-legged poet of colonial times. There are several other fine paintings in the show, including straight landscapes as well as two naked Narcissi left over from the previous phase, but these neatly-dressed Australian Omars on the edge of the wilderness and oblivious of it are the nub. One can see, in two dreadfully facile crucifixions and in a series of histrionic pink and white flatfish, how impossible it is for Boyd any longer to accommodate his mythic images in the foreground. The question is – the one he must be urgently asking himself – what on earth can he replace them with except his own poetically-dreaming, bourgeois past?

Neither Terry Frost nor Ruskin Spear is the self-conscious type of artist. Frost taught full-time at Reading University for nine years, Spear at the Royal College for 27. Teaching does not encourage introspection and, although Spear has occasionally poked fun at other people's art-styles (especially abstraction), neither has shown any sign of doubt about his own. Frost began painting as a prisoner-of-war and, influenced by Pasmore and Hepworth, was among the early post-war British converts to abstraction. Indeed his broad, easy way with simple shapes and bright colours has probably done much to help others find enjoyment in abstraction. His latest show contains examples of the subtler colours – bleached with white or passing through grey – which he has been exploring in recent years, as well as characteristic variations on the ring, the circle and the diamond with modest elements of collage. One does not expect to be surprised by Frost and one is not, but it's good, clean, fresh stuff straight up from Cornwall and a pleasant tonic on a dull March day.

I suspect Ruskin Spear of being a back-slapper. He began in the crepuscular, brown-Windsor-soup, Sickert tradition and has never looked forward. He is capable of workmanlike portraits and specialises in heavyweight sitters with large lips and Hapsburg chins, but his preference for quick effects is constantly at odds with his stodgy palette and conventional ideas of composition. Look at his hopelessly inert attempt at collage in the picture called *Sid James*. He has frequent recourse to caricature, whether intentionally of the famous – Thatcher, Heath, Princess Anne – or, perhaps unselfconsciously, of the anonymous denizens of deserted pubs. It is a world reduced to the obvious and then reduced again to the loud laugh at the obvious.

Displayed in museums Brancusi's sculptures have an air of sovereign self-containment: glittering, perfected essences of a head, a bird, a fish. Photographed by himself in his studio they seem more like performers off-stage, half-undressed, domestic, mingling with shadows and each other, their scale relative instead of absolute. The newly opened 12 Duke Steet Gallery is showing a selection of these photographs, including a splendid self-portrait of the sculptor in profile using an enormous rectangular saw to cut up the sections of the Endless Column. Strange to see that unforgettable image as nothing but a block of wood lying on its side.

The idea behind *Japan Style* is admirable: to show examples of modern Japanese design – cups, cruets, lamps, radios, plastic food-displays, pinball machines – side-by-side with traditional survivals – the wrapping for presents, pottery bowls, lacquer-ware, kimonos and even a complete ceremonial tea-house. It is arranged under headings such as 'Elegance', 'Simplicity', 'Compactness' and one can hardly quarrel with any of these judgments. Yet the thing fails in its prime purpose. Far from bringing one closer to the spirit of Japan, it turns a whole country into a window-display. The glossy accompanying booklet is no catalogue but a glorified tourist brochure. In the far corner of the exhibition is a stall run by Liberty's selling some of the items on show. *The Garden, Hollywood* and now *Japan Style*: is this the artistic face of Thatcherism? Is the V & A becoming our first State department-store?

Weekend Competition

No 2609 **Set by Toby Jugge**

'The best reason for not being President,' said Adlai Stevenson, 'is that you have to shave twice a day.' Nevertheless, as we show elsewhere in this issue, there are still plenty of people prepared to make that sacrifice. Why not add a few more to the list of presidential hopefuls? Please write a campaign speech for any well-known living American who is not already a candidate, in which he or she is as disingenuous as possible about his or her reasons for wanting the job. The more barefaced lies, the greater will be your share of the comp slush fund. Up to 150 words, please, by 3 April.

No 2606 **Set by Paddy Beesley**

A recent survey showed that the average American couple spend 27 minutes of the week actually talking to each other. We asked for a transcript.

Report **By Farouche Features**

I hope none of you ever wants to go to the States again: my sources in Grosvenor Square tell me that precious few visas will be forthcoming after this little outrage. In truth, however, it wasn't predominantly a xenophobic comp, since one could give equally devastating accounts of the average British couple (another time, another comp). The standard of entries was impressively high – look to your reputations, Albee and Miller! – and I have no hesitation in awarding seven quid a throw.

a) Hon. . .
b) Hon . . . *Yup?* . . . yuh faid the dawgs of late? . . . *Uhuh* . . .
c) Yew, yew recawl where yew wuz when JFK wuz blasted? . . . *Nope* . . . *Hey, wuzn't we here?* . . . hey, yeah! We wuz! . . .
d) *Kids home?* . . . Ain't seenum, hon . . . *Then ah jes seenum on Channel 25* . . . Oh yeah? . . . *Police is holdinum fur questions* . . . Kids . . .
e) *TV dinner okay?* . . . What?
f) Aw sheet . . . *huh?* . . . Don't matter. . . .
g) Hey, what is this Ayatollah bum, some kinda polack? . . . *Well ah don't know, something like Johnny Carson, only he's a commyunist* . . . Yeah?
h) Says here them rock stars bin snorting Coke . . . How in hell you get it up yaw nose frum a can? . . . *Straw, maybe a straw?* . . . yeah, yeah that figures . . .
i) This pizza? Really? . . . *Sayed it on the packet* . . . Whoooo, an ah thought it come in lawng strings.
j) Yew, er yew wanna . . . wanna . . . tonight? . . . *Sorry, babe, gotta feminine problem* . . . Oh, oh, okay. . . .

BILL GREENWELL

'Hi, hon! I'm home.'
'Had a good day?'
'Hell, no! You?'
'Junior was sick again. They took him into hospital.'
'Are we covered for that?'
'Yes, I checked first. Did you get the pizza?'
'Sure. One plain, one special.'
'I'll put them in the micro. What happened with you?
'Lundquist jumped to-day. Thirty-second floor.'
'Lundquist? The big Swede?'
'No, the other one.'
'Oh. Who gets his job?'
'Not me, he's in Personnel, second counsellor.'
'Maybe it'll be one of your lot to-morrow.'
'No chance, it's Saturday.'
'Here's your pizza. Coffee?'
'Sure. Say, this looks a good programme.'

JOHN SWEETMAN

'Hi, honey! Good week?'
'Great! Tokyo was great – and Moscow, but *cold*. IGF accepted and we're having an in-depth dialogue with the Swedes. How about you?'
'Great! Hopefully I'm slated for a vice-presidency in the Corporation. I got on the PTA committee, too. Jake's got meningitis and Mike's on the Little League team.'
'Oh fine! Say, who's the fellow in the spare room?'
'That's Homer, our Senior V-P. I'm softening him up. We used a lot of liquor last night. He won't be eating breakfast.'
'Sorry I can't meet up with him. Washington and Montevideo to-day. Say, where's the dog – and Suzy?'
'Oh the dog's dead. They put Suzy in reform school after she strangled him. Like my new hair-do?'
'Great! Fine! I've got to rush. Have the garage fix that fender on the Caddie, will you? Bye, honey.'
'Bye now. Have a great week-end.'

PETER ALEXANDER

'Turn on the Brewer-matic.'
'Not until I've finished my eight miles on the Jog-a-thon.'
'Is the gas tank full?'
'You've got the credit cards.'
'Have a nice day.'
'Have a nice day.'

'Have you fixed the Martini pitcher yet?'
'We've run out of olives.'
'Carter's going to win.'
'But hasn't Reagan had the face-lift?'

'Well, how are the kids?'
'Yours or mine?'
'Hard day at the office?'
'We were taken over.'

MacDonalds?'
'Kentucky Fried please.'

JOHN HAMILTON

'I got raped again today.'
'Uh-huh.'
'In a hypermarket.'
'Too bad.'

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'Is that all you can say?'
'What else is there to say, honey?'
'You could get mad or something.'
'Well, it's not as though you were robbed.'
'I was, too! He grabbed my handbag.'
'How much was in it?'
'About two hundred dollars. And my credit cards.'
'You oughta tell the cops.'
'He *was* a cop.'
'You don't say.'
'Will you stop looking at that goddam screen?'
'It's the Dodgers, for Chrissake!'
'Are they more important than me – ?'
'Wow! See him go!'
'Or the children? . . . Well?'
'I'm thinking.'
'Daryl's coming out.'
'Gutsy kid.'
'And Linda's gonna vote Democrat.'
'Every family's got its problems. How's about another Martini?'

NAOMI MARKS

'OK, well, now, look here, shucks, I mean, Hell, what the . . . I guess, sort of, whaddya know, hot dog, Charlie Brown! cut it out, willya? all the way, you said it, you bet, I never, dig that, c'mon there, *you could have fooled me, sweat it out*, darn, baffle-gab, sure thing, super-duper, strictly union, lay off, gee whizz, how'm I doin'?'
'24 minutes, you goon, why did you have to talk so fast? Now we'll have to start all over again.'
'Hey, wait a minute, how about *you* doing some of the . . .'
'Great, it worked. 27 minutes 05 seconds. Relax kiddo, that's it for the week.'

V. F. CORLEONE

'Hi, honey.'
'Dick, I really can't relate to that kind of aggression. Like, have you considered how *hostile* that term is? It's a sticky secretion, honey, you know? Insect biology. That's how you construct me. And you know why? Because you can't make me come. I mean, not the whole Reichian thing. So why get hung up about it? Like you're not Norman Mailer, so why pretend? He gets a million bucks a book. And what do you get at NYU? Peanuts. Hey, is that why you're so big for Carter this year? You know, subconscious association? OK, drink if you want to. But you're only denying the problem. Know what my analyst says? Martinis are a *mother-surrogate*. Ma-teeny, mother and child, right? Oh listen, while we're talking about analysis, make me out a cheque, would you?'

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Tony Miles

Chess

No 172 **Speculations**

By now most of the quarterfinal candidates' matches will be under way. Spassky plays Portisch in Mexico City, Hübner v Adorjan in Bad Lauterberg, Tal v Polugaevsky in Alma-Ata, and Korchnoy and Petrosian do battle, no doubt in more ways than one, in Graz. It is always a risky business writing Spassky off, as he is a vastly experienced and hardy match player, but on Portisch's recent form the Hungarian must be favourite to go through. Adorjan is the outsider of the event. I have always considered him a very talented player but, as he said in a recent interview, he likes to create works of art when he plays. This is a totally impractical approach and I cannot see him creating more than one or two against Hübner. Tal has a very poor personal score against Polugaevsky but on last year's form I think he should restore the balance a little this time.

Korchnoy-Petrosian is the toughest to predict and on it, I suspect, may hang the whole series. As ever, the intense personal hatred between the two will produce an atmosphere where strong nerves will be more important than chess. Korchnoy has exceptionally strong nerves but Petrosian is also very determined. Both have had poor results, recently, Petrosian in Buenos Aires and Korchnoy at Linares and, less so, at Wyk-aan-Zee, but this is of little relevance. One thing makes me fear for Korchnoy's chances. In the last couple of years he seems to have lost his touch for certain types of positions, his handling of the French Defence against Karpov being a case in point. It seems to me that in some way he has not as much patience as he had and the one thing that is absolutely essential when playing Petrosian is patience. If he allows this to affect his play or lets an inevitable string of draws get on his nerves then I suspect Petrosian will qualify. However, I would certainly not bet on it and there will surely be no more than a point in it either way.

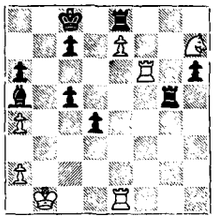
In the first semi-final I expect Portisch to be too professional for Hübner. In the second, if Petrosian wins, I think Tal, with his new solidity added to his old fire, will prove too strong. However, if he should meet Korchnoy it is not so easy. Tal's personal score against Korchnoy is a disaster; I believe it is 13-2 to Korchnoy and it is almost impossible to predict a Tal win against that record. Still, it is not out of the question as he is probably a better all-round player now than when he won the world title.

So to the final. While Portisch is clearly in the top four players in the world at the moment; in my opinion he is not in the first three. He is exceedingly professional and a tireless worker, but somehow he lacks the flair to cope with Tal or Korchnoy. Tentatively, then, I predict a Tal-Karpov match for the title. In any case I can only see three players capable of offering Karpov a real challenge: Tal, Korchnoy and Petrosian. The others all suffer from either inexperience or an inferiority complex. Petrosian would give Karpov a good match but I could never envisage him winning (dying of old age after the two hundredth draw perhaps . . .). Korchnoy of course would provide the greatest spectacle, most publicity and greatest trial for Karpov's nerves and, if he hit form again, he could win. Tal could also provide an excellent opponent – if he were to defect first! Otherwise it is hard to see them playing a real match. A few years ago Tal was distinctly out of favour with the Soviet powers that be and was only saved from the chess equivalent of Siberia by Karpov's personal intervention. Since then he has been a constant member of the world champion's team to the great benefit, apparently, of both. Given this, perhaps the title match could turn out to be a non-event. But perhaps that is speculating too far.

This week's game is from the Riga Interzonal and is, I hope, a taste of what is to come.

White: L. Polugaevsky **Black: M. Tal**
1.N-KB3, P-QB4; 2.P-B4, N-KB3; 3.N-B3, P-Q4; 4.PxP, NxP; 5.P-K4!? N-N5; 6.B-B4, B-K3; 7.BxB, N-Q6ch; 8.K-B1, PxB; 9.N-KN5, Q-N3 (!) 10.Q-K2, P-B5; 11.P-QN3, P-KR3; 12.N-B3, N-B3; 13.PxP, 0-0-0; 14.P-N3, P-N4; 15.K-N2, Q-B4! 16.R-QN1, B-N2; 17.N-QN5, QxP; 18.Q-K3, KR-B1; 19.R-B1, P-N5; 20.N-R4, NxP! 21.N-N6, R-Q6!; 22.N-R3 Q-R5; 23.Q-K1, QR-KB6; 24.NxR, N-Q6; 25.Q-Q1, QxKP; 26.RxR, PxRch; 27.K-B1, Q-B4; 28.K-N1, B-Q5ch; resigns.

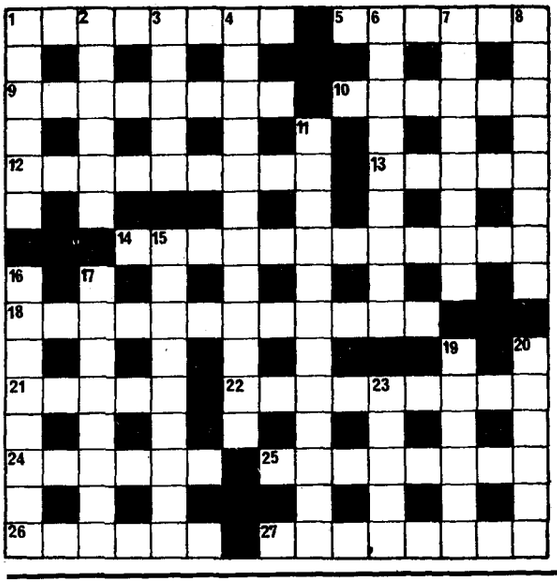
Problem 172
White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 2 April.



Solution to problem 170
1 . . . N-K6! nets a useful pawn eg 2.PxN, BxPch or 2.Q-K1, Q-K5 or 2.PxQ, NxQ.

Weekend Crossword 1337

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1337, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 1 April.



ACROSS

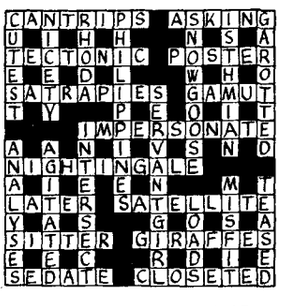
1 Prams do a turn as guides (8).
5 Mode of address for one who makes things obscure (6).
9 Group I bring to court for crime (8).
10 Spars although one is excluded from cheerfulness (6).
12 Fruit used to make gin neater (9).
13 Shrub which puts girls back (5).
14 Warning involved in reading slang (6,6).
18 Father back with his friends to follow a professional team comes close (12).
21 Means of communication a bit unfinished (5).
22 One of the shrubs put in a row in unusually shady surroundings (9).
24 Scorched water-colour? (6).
25 Tree which reveals wind and light (8).
26 Island which has a success in half the time (6).
27 Beheaded not before time and with exultation (8).

DOWN

1 Inhuman creatures born among underground things (6).
2 It provides protection from the sun but you need a little on for the early morning (6).
3 State which is nearly all sea (5).
4 Illumination showing sovereign dismount by standard (7,5).
6 Imperturbable, but if he loses his voice he's a man without aspiration (9).
7 Slimming is the object if *you give the hotel a miss* (8).
8 Mischievous friend behind wreckage of cars (8).
11 Then our lads start attacking freely and with complete dedication (5,3,4).
15 Reparation which could make the tenant love me (9).
16 Most are changing about a thousand for this animal (8).
17 Come close and you'll see a fish goes around very quietly (8).
19 Admitted a strong desire (6).
20 Quietly disconnect my call (6).
23 Something from Christian nations paid to Pope (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1335



Prizewinners to No 1335
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Janet de Quartel (Westmaas)

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For further particulars please write to **Jane Streather, Director, National Council for One Parent Families, 255 Kentish Town Road, London NW5. 01-267 1361.** Closing date for applications: **Monday 31 March 1980.**

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Theatres

ALDWYCH. Royal Shakespeare Company. 836 6404. (Recorded booking info 836 5332). Final perfs 'The Greeks', Ten Greek plays given as a trilogy. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse in Howard Barker's 'The Loud Boys Life' (final perfs) and 'Much Ado About Nothing' (final perfs) and at the Piccadilly Theatre in Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman's 'Once In A Lifetime' and Pam Gems' 'Piaf'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE 722 9301. 'Threads' by John Byrne, sequel to 'The Slab Boys', dir. Robin Lefevre. Prevs from 13-Mar.-23 Mar 8 p.m. Press night 24 Mar 7 p.m. Subs eves 8 p.m. Sat Mat 4.30.

NATIONAL THEATRE, 928 2252. 'As You Like It', 'Othello', 'The Wild Duck', 'Death of a Salesman', 'The Iceman Cometh'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

OLD VIC, 928 7616. Nimrod Theatre of Australia production 'The Club' by David Williamson. 'Riotous mickey-take of life in Brian Cloughland Down Under' E. News. 4 March-12 April. Evgs 7.30. Sat Mat 2.30.

Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL, 435 3366 (opp. Belsize Park Tube), 'My Brilliant Career' (U). Progs. 3.20, 5.20, 7.20, 9.20.

Exhibition

'DETRITUS' by G. Roy Levin a mixed media art work at the Pentonville Gallery, 46 Amwell Street, EC1. Tel. 01-837 9826 20 March to 26 April. Mon.-Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Meetings

THE LABOUR PARTY INQUIRY: Fabian Seminar 10.30 to 4.30, Saturday 29 March, Assembly Room, Central Hall, Westminster. Chair: Bryan Stanley. Speakers: Larry Whitty, John Cartwright, Dianne Hayter, Mike Thomas, Victor Schonfield. Entrance £1. All welcome.

CAMPAIGN Labour Party Democracy! Public Meeting. 1 p.m. Sunday 23 March Winter Gardens, Margate. Chairperson: Anne Shenow. Speakers: Richard Balfe MEP, Dave Wetzel.

NAMIBIA — film 'The Forgotten Colony' plus SWAPO speaker at Kensington Central Library meeting room, Phillimore Walk, W8, Thursday, 27 March 8 p.m. Collection for clinic. West London Anti-Apartheid.

SHAW SOCIETY, Friday 28 March. Eric Wallis on Shaw's Everybody's Political What's What', Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. Coffee 6.30 p.m. Meeting 7 p.m.

ICA EVENTS, The Mall, SW1. 25 Mar. 7.30 John Willett on the Hungarian Avant Garde; 27 Mar. 1.00 Dora Russell discusses her life and work; 27 Mar. 7.00 New Contemporaries Seminar. Tickets 80p. 01-930 3647.

PARTICIPANTS interested in 4-day interaction group starting 25 May. Tel. 01-435 1864.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE: Sunday lectures on religion and philosophy. Enquiries: 06285 26464.

THEOSOPHY: *S.a.e. for pamphlets, book* list, programme. Sun. 23 Mar. 8 p.m. Open Q/A Meeting 'Psychic Laws & Phenomena', ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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Collection: William Connal. Sold at Christie's, March 14th, 1908, No. 35, bought at Sampson for £525.
Exhibited: New Gallery, 1893, No. 66. Exhibited: Liverpool, 1893. See: Magazine of Art, 1898, p. 524.
See: Malcolm Bell, **Sir Edward Burne-Jones,** illus. opp. p. 68.
See: Fortunée de Lisle, **Burne-Jones,** 1904, pp. 114–116.

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